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APPLYING THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL MODEL,
"CULTURAL BIAS" TO THE DRAMA, USING TRAGEDY AS AN EXAMPLE

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APPLYING AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL MODEL TO THE DRAMA USING TRAGEDY

AS AN EXAMPLE

S Y N O P S I S

Dr Mary Douglas' anthropological model of Cultural Bias offers an opportunity to examine social artifacts in terms of both their active social function and their own internal structure, promising to offer a fresh perspective on old dilemmas.

This study applies the Cultural Bias model to several classical Tragedies in an attempt to assess the viability of the model as a basis for a structural Poetics and an interpretive model.

Elaborative analysis is concentrated on the two major Tragedies of Christopher Marlowe. The model encouragingly casts new light on areas in the plays conventionally considered "problematic" while offering a positive reassessment of Marlowe's capacities and intentions. Further issues implied by the model are examined in the context of Shakespeare's Macbeth and two representative Greek Tragedies.

Questions of structural definition and categorisation demand relative comparison. Death of a Salesman and The Crucible, representatives of modern dramas whose definition has often been linked with classical Tragedy are examined and compared with the classical form through the criteria of the model. The modern plays are revealed to have a distinctly different form and implicit social function than the classical plays, highlighting the advantages, if not the necessity for a significant process of categorisation and confirming the viability of the model as a delineating source.

The final part of this study examines four plays from the 20th century which have presented critical and interpretive problems. Detailed analysis through the model provides a coherent interpreta-

tion as well as solutions to their problematic elements and suggests that these plays, despite their stylistic differences, share a formal structure with classical Tragedy. This analysis implies a possible reassessment of contemporary plays in a more extensive, formal context.

In the process of this investigation, the model of Cultural Bias has proved a stimulating and revealing interpretive tool. Its interpretations work as both intellectual and performance models, are capable of resolving textual problems, and offer fresh perspectives. It also offers evidence of a coherent active social function inherent in the Arts. Numerous further avenues of study have also been uncovered and are suggested here.

INTRODUCTION

This study evolves from problems in the study of the drama for which I could find no satisfactory approach. One was the problematic definition of form. Definitions in use appeared to be either a matter of general tradition or implied value judgments that render classification useless except to confirm traditional assumptions or define the personal preferences of the classifier. A coherent non-judgmental system of classification, a "Poetics", could prevent the act of classification being treated as an end in itself and, simultaneously, establish a firm base from which the investigatory critic could venture into deeper analysis.

Secondly, I suspected that the form of a work actively participates in the creation of meaning and effect. If so, then forms, themselves, would contain implicit themes and meanings. It would follow that there was a direct, active relationship between the creation and use of specific forms and the societies in which they had been conceived, implying a signifying feed-back system between society and the artifacts it creates.

Nor does traditional criticism usually consider an active inter-relationship between form and content. Content-based criticism often seems biased and imbalanced through social and/or personal preconceptions. Form is often taken for granted or treated as if it were entirely independent of the content it contains. Since the same story can be told in any number of ways, one can infer that the effect of the work and many of the themes it accrues emanate from the perspective and demands of form. Thus, forms may be viewed as inter-active, meaning-making devices which are more likely the manifestation of organising perspective than content.

An active relationship between form and content further

suggests interactive signifying between all the elements of the work. Thus, questions regarding "dramatic poetry" are highlighted: how to define it; how it functions in the play; its relationship to "ordinary speech". I isolated "high" Tragedy because of its resonances, its demands on the language, and, especially, its rarity.

Fortuitously, four modern dramas appeared which seemed to present the basic structures and powerful impact associated with Tragedy, making the possibility of approaching the problems of dramatic poetry feasible. After all, we know little about how the ancient Greeks or Elizabethans talked in the street, but we do know how we speak! Theoretically, it would be possible to analyse how our vernacular was transformed to create the resonances of dramatic poetry and then analyse the function of this reconstructed language as an active element in the text.

However, a new problem arose recalling the questions of form, content and social relevance. To my mind, Armstrong's Last Goodnight, (Arden), Greek and The Fall of the House of Usher (Berk-off) and The Sons of Light (Rudkin) have fundamentally similar form and a quality of impact that would classify them as "Tragedies" along with the plays of the Greeks and the Elizabethans/Jacobean. On the surface, however, these plays are so stylistically different, both from the classics and each other, that I could hardly assume general agreement. How was I to set an acceptable basis for definition and, thus, analysis?

If my observations were correct, there must be an infrastructure which the plays share. Once more, I became aware of the need for a Poetics based on analysis of form which would stress the relationship between form and content and offer possibilities of analysing structure and identifying structural themes.

Further, if a form which had been commonly assumed outdated, even impossible, in our time, had suddenly appeared, its occurrence itself is significant, implying that our assumptions about the classical form might have been limited and that the recurrence of the form has social implications. To decipher the significances, some external model was needed which would give an objective framework within which to unravel the complications and, thereby, hopefully, untouched mysteries of past works, free as possible from previous preconceptions.

I came across the works of anthropologist Mary Douglas by accident. Her model of "cultural bias", which links Bernstein's language codes with an anthropological analysis of social structure appeared to offer both the specificity of terminology and the scope to support complex analysis. This study is an attempt to apply Dr Douglas' model to the drama - specifically Tragedy - in order to investigate its efficacy in illuminating the text as well as examining the relationship of the form to its social context. The purpose is not to prove the detailed perfection of the model nor to disprove other critical approaches, but to apply her model to another discipline in order to test its applicability and evaluate the resulting implications, thereby suggesting a possible alternative approach.

The basis of Dr Douglas' work is a model which defines social cosmologies (or world views) and their cultural manifestations in relationship to their social structures. In other words, it charts a direct, interactive relationship between the social structure and the languages through which the society expresses itself and gives itself and its members justification and significance.

The model is based on the premise that "reality" is not

"fact" but social consensus. "The perceived universe is socially constructed."¹ From this base, Dr Douglas develops a model which elaborates the social construct of reality in terms of the relationship between the individual and society. The assumption is that the basic premises on which the reality and value system of a society is based will be found at the point where the individual finds it necessary to justify himself and/or elicit justification from others.

"The action, or social context, is placed on a two dimensional map with moral judgements, excuses, justifications by individuals of the action they feel required to take ... it constitutes a collective moral consciousness about man and his place in the universe."²

The principles by which ultimate justification and evaluation are made will, by necessity, imply cosmological or "natural" laws which link human existence to the laws of nature, thereby implying an active 'cosmology' which confirms the unspoken, "self-evident" principles on which the reality system and society's own justification and significance, are based.

"The cosmological scheme connects up the bits of experience and invests the whole with meaning; the people who accept it will only be able to justify their treatment of one another in terms of these ultimate categories."³

Thus, both the validity of the society and the significance of each individual member is confirmed and reiterated by the validation of the social context through the assumed cosmological laws.

The model not only implies that reality itself is a matter of social consensus but also suggests that all reality systems have

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1. Douglas, Mary, Natural Symbols. Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1973, page 9
 2. Douglas, Mary, Cultural Bias. Occasional Paper No 35 Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, London 1979, page 14
 3. Natural Symbols. pagel6

both advantages and disadvantages, insights and blindnesses inherent in their construction of meaningful reality out of the components of experience. The model is thus non-judgemental since all systems are implicitly equally valid in their own terms.

Dr Douglas isolates the fundamental principles of any social cosmology as those which define the relationship between the individual and society. She proposes to analyse this relationship in terms of two basic dimensions:

- GROUP: the value accrued and the pressures on the individual through membership of the group.
- GRID: role and obligations and the benefits and demands thereof.

The dimensions of group/grid are the elements which invest the society, the individual, and all their machinations with meaning and value. They work both as constrictions within the vast mass of unstructured possibilities and as validators, investing worth and meaning beyond the limits of immediate experience. They provide a context of signification giving the individual focus and value within both a social and a cosmological context; they invest the person with meaning and his actions with significance and acknowledged effect.

Through application of these two dimensions, Dr Douglas posits four basic cosmological structures or "world views":

GRID	g/G	g/g
	G/G	G/g

GROUP

Strong Group/Strong Grid (G/G) defines a society in which

the constraints of both group membership and role are strong. Value and meaning are acquired through membership of the group and the enactment of prescribed role. This is the Integrated world view.

Low group/low grid society (g/g) is one in which the demands of both group and grid are low and therefore do not function as the source of significance and value; rather, meaning is projected from the individual outwards. Hence, Personalised or Individualist world view.

These two structures are primary in that they are the major systems on which most societies are based. The other two systems are largely, by necessity, either outgrowths of or sets within the two larger cosmological systems.

In strong group/low grid (G/g) membership of the group is the fundamental signifier and roles are usually unascribed and unacknowledged. This system, according to Dr Douglas, stresses purity as a central criterion, separating the group from other groups, justifying its uniqueness, and standing for the evaluation of membership. Examples might include the Puritans of 17th c. America, Communes, millennium cults, etc.

Low group/strong grid (g/G) defines groups who derive no value from group membership and whose significance is derived entirely from obligations and performance of roles. Most common examples: slaves, servants, etc.

It follows that every individual, every action, every product of a society, in essence, would express or comment upon the fundamental assumptions the society holds about the structure of reality, the value system, the meaning of life, and the place of man in the universe. In other words, every utterance would implicitly confirm the justifying cosmological system. Thus, one could draw

assumptions about possible expression from one's knowledge of the social cosmology, and it is my contention that one can read the cosmology back from its artifacts.

The very act of ordering the components of existence into a structure of signifying reality implies a foregrounding of some elements and a backgrounding, even elimination, of others. "Facts" which do not cohere are not relevant; if they impose, they can be reinterpreted to cohere with acceptable assumptions. An element of experience recognised as vital and unquestionable in one context might not even be acknowledged to have viable existence in another. In all cases, there would necessarily be elements of expression, feeling, action which remain outside the reality structure and therefore unacknowledged.

Because the social cosmology is, by definition, an expression of social consensus and because the justification of both the social structure and the individual rest entirely on the precepts of this consensus, the basic precepts are not up for discussion. They are assumed to be inherent truths which inform every activity in the society - if not in existence.

"Each theory has its hidden implications. These are its unspoken assumptions about the nature of ultimate reality ... There is no need to make them explicit because this is the common basis of experience ... Such shared assumptions underlie any discourse, even the elaborated speech code which is developed to inspect them. They are the foundations on which social reality is constituted."¹

To elaborate, a short examination of how these precepts function in the two major cosmologies:

The integrated (G/G) world proposes a homogeneous society

1. Natural Symbols, page 173

organised in an explicit hierarchy which is confirmed and mirrored by a corresponding cosmological hierarchy of which it is a functioning part. The primary truth informing the integrated world is that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; the ultimate value, the health, integrity and continuance of the whole.

Each part is defined and evaluated through membership to and function within the whole. Thus, the individual accrues value by dint of his inclusion and his role whose obligations are valued in relation to the healthy functioning of the social and cosmological structure. All actions complementing the well-being of the whole are valued and reflect credit on their perpetrators. Any action interfering with or undermining the integrity of the whole is, by definition, negative.

One advantage to the Integrated system is that every element within it is deemed indispensable to its integrity and thus has automatic value. All members, no matter how apparently insignificant, are ascribed places within the hierarchy. Each has value and relevance; all are assumed necessary and beneficial to the proper functioning of the "natural order."

The hierarchical nature of the structure is inclusive from the highest cosmological powers to the ethonic depths. Order and structure are overt and acknowledged. Roles are ascribed. The role is larger than the man. The onus falls on the person to live up to the role. Hence, there is no distinction between the role and its performer. The person taking on a role takes on not only its obligations but also the values inherent in the role. Thus, one becomes "kingly" by becoming King. Obligations are proof of the importance of the role; carrying out these obligations allows the man the value of the role in the flourishing whole. Thus, individual worth is

confirmed through Group and Grid.

Meaning is, thus, generated in the relationship between the whole and its parts. The hierarchy affords a shared metaphor extending beyond the immediate time and place. Morality stems directly from the reinforcement of the system and is justified by tradition. The Integrated world affords a shared value system with external standards shared by its members: punishments and rewards are prescribed. The primary function of language, both speech and symbol, is to confirm the system. Whenever G/G speaks, it speaks, ultimately, of relationship and the integrity of the whole. Thus, it needs no more than a restricted language code (Bernstein) which defines and confirms the relationship of the parts to the whole; reiterates the good of the whole; and establishes the relationship between the whole and its parts. These basic premises which justify the inter-dependent relationship between the whole and its parts and gives them meaning and value are the "self-evident" assumptions that underlie all its discourse.

The low group/low grid (g/g) world is the exact antithesis of G/G. The individual is the signifying unit and the centre of meaning. Meaning and morality are assumed to be personal. Since there is no intrinsic value in belonging to the group, the concept has little acknowledgement. In fact, both group and grid have negative implications by definition. The ultimate truth is the uniqueness of the individual and its sanctity; the ultimate value, success. Success is achieved by imposing one's own value system on others. The more the individual's personal uniqueness gains public acknowledgement, the more of his fellows he can coerce into his own personal system, imposing his uniqueness on both individuals and society, the more value and worth he accrues for himself. Fundamen-

tally, the basic, only shared premise of the individualist system is that every person is unique and it is not only his "right" to express this individuality, but his existential purpose.

The denial of group and grid does not mean that the g/g world is actually free of hierarchy, merely that its hierarchical structure is hidden and unacknowledged. Roles, for example, exist by necessity. However, they are assumed, by definition, to be either unacceptable constraints on the freedom and individuality of the person or confirmation of his own personal worth. Thus, in a person-alised world, if one becomes king (or President or P.M.) the kingship is assumed to be external proof of one's personal superiority; the obligations of the role, either constraints or secondary considerations.

Since the one shared value is the quality of "uniqueness", it is assumed that communication is problematic. An "elaborated code" is necessary to allow the individual to highlight distinctions between himself and others and to elaborate his terms and position. Since meaning, and, therefore, morality stems not from a shared sense of an over-all pattern but from the personal perspective of the individual, the elaborated code also serves to establish this uniqueness, to delineate and, if possible, impose it on the outside world.

It follows that language, symbol, ritual and all cultural artifacts may be seen as modes of communication which ultimately speak the cosmological truths of the society, reinforcing and commenting upon them. The d/g world speaks, primarily, in a restricted code which confirms the value of the whole over the parts and reinstates the part into the meaningful centre. Its themes are relationship and integration.

The g/g world speaks an elaborated code which is exclusive.

It celebrates uniqueness and elaborates distinctions between the parts. However, by definition, beneath the elaborated code developed to analyse, distinguish and isolate, lies an implicit, restricted code by which individual success, the expression of self, and sacredness of the individual (however contradictory) inform all communication, evaluation, justification and action. Success rules out punishment, thereby creating a particular concern with separation between means and ends and between the inner and outer man. The central themes of personalisation are uniqueness and isolation.

These two major cosmological systems are blatantly immutable. No compromise is possible since their most sacred and fundamental precepts are mutually exclusive. The acknowledgement of one invalidates the other.

The model affords a position from which to consider all and any artifacts as communication devices in active discussion with the society in which they have been generated. We can read in both directions between the society and its manifestations. It follows that certain forms of dialogue will, in specific societies at specific times, be more relevant, more viable than others. We can infer, then, that form, which functions as an ordering device, is also a communication device inter-relative with social context and thus not only contains but is the result of necessary thematic material made viable and confronted through the formal structure.

The artifact itself may be approached as an integrated world in which every action, gesture and line speaks back to the integrity of the whole. Thus, with the assistance of Douglas and Bernstein, we can approach theatrical dialogue as an integrated part of the action and focus on the underlying assumptions informing it.

grid: 'the value of the individual'. Each basic principle, the value of the group, the value of the individual, is the point of reference that justifies action of a potentially generative kind ... when each pulls against the other, the tension is a dialogue within society."¹

Nothing stands still. The change from one reality structure to its opposite is a major crisis creating a dialogue within the society itself and, inevitably, a confusion of terms. For most of the time, one view reigns absolute. However, when a chink appears in the exclusiveness of either vision and the opposing way of organising reality is seen as a viable alternative, all the implicit meanings and unquestioned assumptions that lay behind and reinforced the established structure come into question. Thus, what was "taken for granted" becomes "an issue" ²

My contention is that Tragedy is an external manifestation of this critical dialogue. ³

The Tragic form becomes viable and imminent at the moment of intersection as the social cosmology moves between Integrated and Personalised reality structures; its social function is to elaborate the unspoken, underlying "self-evident" assumptions of the existing

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1. Cultural Bias. page 13
 2. Hence, although E.M. Tillyard accurately identifies "The Elizabethan World Picture" foreground in Elis/Jacobean literature (and art), the fact that these issues are so overt in the works is an indication that they are, arguably, "The Medieval World Picture" which has become problematic.
 3. Since all cultures, inevitably, will move between reality systems, the question is posed why the Greeks and the English, specifically, found it necessary to express the crisis in drama. The problem requires an examination of the relationship of specific art forms to specific societies over the range of their histories and an analysis of the choice of specific art forms as modes of social expression. It is a question presently beyond my brief.

cosmology.

The Tragic form arises out of a direct confrontation between the established cosmology and its immediate opposite giving rise to the central motivating structural theme of "ordering". A signifying context is established by which the evaluating terms of personal action and social consequence are elaborated and assessed. Through the interplay between language and action, Tragedy exposes the underlying assumptions of the cosmology. Thus Tragedy functions as an elaborated code, making the implicit explicit.

The Tragic vision evolves when a rent appears in the canvas of reality through which the writer spies an opposite, but equally viable means of organising existence. The confrontation between these two mutually exclusive world views is played out through the action of the drama. The quest of the Tragic hero, then, is the search for a viable platform of action so his deeds can have meaning and effect (and justification) in a world where the definitions of reality and terms of evaluation are changing, where the justifying definitions can no longer be taken for granted. Language, by necessity, is an active, integral participant in this drama. The "self-evident" assumptions of the society are exposed, elaborated and assessed through the action of the Tragedy and their implications made manifest.

This honing down of fundamental assumptions inevitably exposes the naked ontological question: what is a "Man"? what is the place and significance of human existence in the cosmos? arguably, one source of the form's powerful resonance.

Tragedy occurs at Barthes' "knife edge" where normally exclusive patterns are pitted together at equal force. The rare occurrence of Tragedy supports the suggestion that it is formed by a

crisis in the fabric of the social consensus of reality. (It is worth noting that there is a form of comedy which appears simultaneously with Tragedy and does not appear to be a viable expression at other periods.) It follows that it is through form, itself, that a work speaks of and to its social world.

Analysis of several plays will hopefully support this structural definition, demonstrate the applicability of the model as a method of interpretive analysis and as a method of devising a "Poetics" of form, and reveal further implications and avenues of study.

DR FAUSTUS - THE PROBLEM OF TRANSCENDING THE ESTABLISHED ORDER

In terms of the model, one finds in Marlowe's The Tragical History of Dr Faustus.¹ a rebellion against a strong G/G society using the language and symbols which confirm that order. Faustus cannot find a positive, effective form of action because he is continually reconfirming the very system he wishes to escape.

Faustus' world is unquestionably a G/G system, a highly elaborate hierarchy including not only the society of human beings but also the Heavens and the environs of Hell. The system of relationships and boundaries is carefully worked out and includes an automatic system of rewards and punishments, all of which are built into the hierarchy, reinforce it, and are part of the understanding of it. Anything enhancing and strengthening the social order would, of course, be rewarded. Anti-social action, destructive to the order, denying of its meaningful forms, is punishable. This accords with Mary Douglas' model.

The cosmological order in Faustus' world is constructed as a series of mirror images: God and the Heavens, mirrored by man in society, mirrored by Lucifer and the Kingdom of Hell; all ordered in accordance with the same system of relationships. Action in the world of man, looking toward God, would be confirming to the order; action associated with the underworld, negative to it. It should be obvious at this point that association with the negative side of the order is still a confirmation of the order as a whole, especially if one accepts the prescribed punishments as a natural consequence of such action.

1. Textual quotations from: Marlowe, Christopher, The Tragical History of Dr Faustus. CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE. THE COMPLETE WORKS. ed. J E Steane, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1987.

Since the individual, in the strong group/grid society, is first and foremost seen as an integrated part of his society, the terms used to define the self, to set boundaries and to justify actions will necessarily be those denoting role and/or relationship. ("You are too young; I'm your father; he's the teacher; you're the patient") Faustus begins his quest for his identity by trying to find a role for himself as transcribed within the system and finds it wanting. He ends finding and living out a role clearly defined by the system: he becomes a living example of how the system works, a metaphor for the perfect aptness of the entire structure.

The action begins with Faustus going through his books trying to find a place for himself within the established order. It is important to note that it is not suggested at any point in the play that this is not, as a whole, a workable system. The system has not broken down. Faustus' problem is personal. He does not question the system or the way it functions, it is simply too restricting for him, personally. He feels limited by its definitions and the way it defines its ultimate goals: "The end of physic is the body's health" ... "The reward of sin is death ... Why then we must sin and consequently die" .. "This study fits a mercenary drudge, who aims at nothing but external trash."

Two distinct complaints are evident here. One is the materialism of the rewards set for achievement. The other is the apparent uselessness of action set in the context of ultimate death. Faustus defines himself as "man" and therefore mortal. "Yet art thou still Faustus and a man." So defined, he is limited both in his field of action and length of life.

Couldst thou make men to live eternally
Or being dead, raise them to live again.
Then this profession were to be esteemed²

At the simplest level, Faustus finds himself bounded by the opportunities open for action within the established system. Neither the social order nor its definition of self give Faustus the breadth of action or range of social achievement he desires: they are too limited and too material. He needs more scope.

Theoretically, there are two basic choices in such a situation: to expand the order itself, to redefine, or to attempt to move outside the existing order. In other words, to set up another value system or to follow one's own system of values. One might call them the social route and the personal route.

Faustus appears to take the personal approach. He is concerned with his own movement. In Mary Douglas' terms, the active extension of this choice would mean to speak and act within an elaborated code of speech in which values and consequences are related to the personal experience of the speaker so that the context in which he acts takes on his image. However, Faustus does not do this. He chooses to expand beyond the existing order, but limits himself by using the same definitions, the same hierarchy and value system he is attempting to transcend. Thus he continues to be bound by the same terms which originally restricted him.

His expansion centres on his decision to study magic. Magic is assumed to be "outside" the order, but even Faustus, in the very beginning, describes it simply as a reversal: "These necromantic books are heavenly." He does not attempt to change or redefine the

2. Act I, Scene 1, lines 24-6, p266

books are heavenly." He does not attempt to change or redefine the order; he simply desires to control it as it is: "All things that move between the quiet poles/shall be at my command."³

If we see order, for the sake of argument, as an accepted system of values defining relationships and manifesting itself in symbolic forms, one can see that changing the "order" would involve invoking a new system of values, thereby changing the relationships between the components of existence: making a new system. This would be expressed, ultimately, in a new set of symbols. Standing the whole thing on its head is not "outside" the order, but a negative version of it. The relationships remain the same. To regard the hellish as "heavenly" is not asocial, or the construction of an alternative system, but anti-social. Just as any action promoting the established system of values will theoretically reap known rewards, so actions against it will automatically reap preordained punishment. Faustus accepts the inevitability and aptness of the penalties from the beginning: "Heap God's wrath upon thy head." He never doubts the precepts of morality inherent in the order he is theoretically rejecting: to read the scriptures brings rewards, to dabble in magic, punishment. His doubts seem to centre on how far he can go before he tips himself over all the way into inevitable punishment. It is the question of extent that confuses Faustus, not the basic assumptions on which good and evil are based, nor the symbols which express them.

The way in which a society orders its cosmology and places the individual within it, will necessarily dictate its moral concepts. In a strong group/grid system, the individual is primarily

3. Act I, scene 1, lines 55-56, p277

part of the whole; good and evil are directly related to the confirmation of society's value. There are many ways of structuring reality, but in a strong group/grid system, whatever its "beliefs" and specific values, "good" is always a confirmation of consensus. (In a personalised society, morality emanates from the individual consciousness and not general consensus. Thus: "nothing is good or bad but thinking makes it so.") Faustus experiences "good and evil" in the terms dictated by his society, assigning to them the same values and symbols.

SYMBOLS

Like language, symbols are a communication code and will reflect the world view of the society in which they are used. In a strong group/grid society, symbols, like language will primarily reinforce the structure. Their form and meaning will be shared by the members of the society. In a personalised system, it is up to the individual to project his own system of values on the outside world and create new meaning in it.

Faustus does project his inner state outward by externalising his conflict. But unlike Hamlet for example, who projects his state of mind on anything that comes his way - unweeded gardens, travelling players, nutshells, recorders, etc - instantly investing them, and himself, with a wealth of meaning, Faustus seems only able to conjure up the accepted symbols of his society. His alter-ego appears as Mephistophilis; entertainment as the Seven Deadly Sins; the epitome of ultimate goodness is an old man. He signs an official deed of covenant. Even blood takes on the classical significance of the blood of Christ; flowing for mankind: "Why streams it not" when he is signing away his soul; "See where Christ's blood streams in the

firmament" at the moment of damnation. Even when he first talks of what he will do with his magical powers, he sees the world as static, unchangeable, something he can only dress up a bit: walling Germany with gold, dressing the scholars in silk. Faustus' words and thoughts are riddled with the dichotomy of Heaven and Hell, spiritual verses worldly riches. Just as it never seems to occur to him that with his magic he might change the very face of reality, it never seems to occur to him that there can be any relationships between spirit and matter except direct opposition. So instead of finding images in the world that mirror his own state of mind, he finds his own mind represented by images that already exist in the outside world: the symbols of his own society reflect himself. He is himself, the metaphor of his society's world view.

THE GOOD AND EVIL ANGELS

The Angels set the limit of possibilities in Faustus' personal world. They are conventional symbols of knowledge in the society, and, for Faustus, they speak the ultimate extensions of morality: good and evil; punishment and reward. In this sense, they are the metaphysical boundaries of Faustus' imagination. They begin by stating the fruits of their commitment: Heaven and heavenly things or honour and wealth. Faustus' world is circumscribed by the terms of the order he is attempting to overthrow. He accepts its boundaries, its system of reward and punishments without question.

The Angels are not opposites, but two ways of saying the same thing. They are not ultimately opposing choices, but representative of the same world view. It is therefore not surprising that

in the end they unite to confirm the final judgement of Mephistophilis:

MEPHISTOPHILIS: Fools that will laugh on earth must weep in Hell.⁴

GOOD ANGEL: The jaws of Hell are open to receive thee.⁵

EVIL ANGEL: He that loves pleasure must for pleasure fall.⁶

All are agreed. Faustus has cared too much for earthly things and now must taste Hell's pains. There is no alternative offered.

Faustus uses the vocabulary and its accepted implications, the symbols and the value system of the established order to define and judge his own actions. Any choice under these circumstances is a confirmation of the order itself.

MEPHISTOPHILIS

In his revolt against the established ordering of things, Faustus could not have called up a more pertinent adversary than Mephistophilis. Mephisto never lets a chance go by to confirm the existing order. He is the epitome of convention, continually confirming the existence of the soul, Hell, the pain of denial, the sufferings of those denied the face of God, the hierarchical order and the conventional penalties of contravention. As soon as Faustus calls up Mephisto, he is reminded that Mephistophilis works for Lucifer and that he's only come on the off-chance that Faustus is ready to damn himself. The hierarchy of relationships, even the pecking order, is clearly set out and the implications made overt.

Faustus' very calling on Mephisto is proof that he is still

4. Act V, scene 2, line 106, p334

5. Act V, scene 2, line 128, p335

6. Act V, scene 2, line 140, p336

working within the established order. He "conjures" Mephisto from the underworld both literally and figuratively. Mephistophilis is the manifestation of Faustus' own picture of society's world view: he functions as both tempter and conscience. But his warnings only seem to encourage Faustus, indicating that he also stands as a figure of authority for Faustus.

Taking Faustus as the individual, a combination of the singular man and his society, then Mephistophilis is surely what he has ingested of the social order, his social unconscious, the implied "world view". As Faustus sees the limitations of the existing order in terms of worldly action and its ultimate results, so Mephisto sees and represents the world in terms of its permanent hierarchy and its effect. He is the social conscience where actions result in directly related rewards and punishments. All actions are seen as sustaining or destructive to the established order and therefore as eliciting direct reward or punishment.

Faustus originally sees the order as restricting because it limits his capacity for action as an individual. This implies that it is the extent of possible effect he is concerned with, not the appropriateness of reward and punishment. Ironically, his attempt to deny the order both denies him any social effect and throws him pell mell into the sphere of reward and punishment. In other words, beginning as an individual wishing to see himself not as a cog in a pre-constructed whole but as an independent being, he so constructs his revolt as to become only an illustration of the way the system works.

Mephistophilis first appears as a horrifying devil. Faustus sends him back to return as a monk. Not an essential change, but the kind of reversal we see throughout the play: bad dressed as good, but

still defined as "bad". Faustus simply reverses the symbolism, confirming the significance of the symbol, and reaffirming his inability to distinguish definition from implication.

It is Mephisto, dressed as a monk, who tells him:

Why this is Hell ...⁷

All Places shall be held Hell that are not Heaven.⁸

A monk could not have put it better!

Instead of denying the existing order, he confirms it. He tells the story of Lucifer's fall, basing the ordering firmly on the precedence of history; he refuses to talk of God. He confirms the structure and its implications, its values and its system of rewards and punishments. He confirms the social hierarchy of relationships in his reiteration of the chain of command and his own exclusion from the vital centre, Heaven. Theoretically, Faustus calls up Mephistophilis as a denial of the entire system, but Mephisto only reinforces it. Mephistophilis, the manifestation of Faustus' belief in that ordering of reality and its hold on him, is Faustus' constant companion, and the source of his power.

This is Hell, nor am I out of it ...

Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed

In one self place. But where we are is hell,

And where hell is there must we ever be.⁹

The purpose of Hell is to confirm the existence of Heaven.

In the strong group/grid system, everything is organised to maintain the social order and reconfirm its cosmological view. Beyond conveying information, language expresses the structure and reinforces it. Actions are either reinforcements of the system, in

7. Act I, scene 3, line 76, p275

8. Act I, scene 5, line 129, p289

9. Act I, scene 3, lines 76-79, p275; lines 124-126, p.283

which case rewards ensue, or destructive to it, in which case there are well defined and automatic punishments. Light can only be shed on this highly organised system by an elaborated code of language developed through the need to express individual distinctions and whose purpose is to enhance and reinforce not the system but the individual. The basis for moral judgement would then come from the individual; values, internalised and personal. One would then be able to see the strong group/grid system from another vantage point.

We have already seen that Faustus does not attempt in any vital way to make distinctions. He seems to act on the assumption that by reversing the positioning one has changed the essence, as if by dressing Mephisto as a monk, building a church to Lucifer or calling Divinity "vile" one has essentially changed the meaning and, therefore, the structure. However, by giving the same significance to the symbols he merely reinforces the structure.

Faustus has internalised the cosmology of his society. He has adopted the restricted code that reinforces it, so whenever he speaks, he speaks in the terms of the system he has theoretically rejected. His speech is not an elaborated extension of himself, but a personal confirmation of the established order. When he manifests it in full physical form to have more power to free himself and assert his individuality, he manifests a consciousness more dedicated to the reassertion of the system than himself. Every word out of Mephisto's mouth strengthens the existing order. The beauty of the restricted code is that no matter how you use it, it will always perform the same function: confirm itself.

When Faustus blames his predicament on Mephisto¹⁰, Mephisto

10. Act II, scene 1, lines 1-3, p285

uses the accepted values to "prove" that Man - and therefore Faustus - is more excellent than Heaven. Faustus concludes "If Heaven was made for man it was made for me," thus confirming the original arrangement. No matter which angle you come to it from, since the code is restricted, it is always describing the same structure of relationships. Thus, Faustus is trapped. Whether he sees himself as inside the circle or outside it, it is still the ultimate centre from which all significance flows. The purpose of any cosmology, whether based on the individual or society, is to make sense of actions and events.

Mephisto, who embodies the code, moves more freely within it than Faustus. One can see Faustus' extreme limitation when using it, for example, when he asks for a wife. "I am wanton and lascivious and can not live without a wife." His interpretation of the code is, on every level, literal. The answer to the call of lust must be marriage. But Mephisto answers, "marriage is but a ceremonial toy." Completely accepting the order, and his place in it. Mephisto is able to distinguish between what is essential and what can be manipulated within the general structure. He will give Faustus "more than thou has wit to ask"; a telling line, for Faustus' limitations in choice and language indicate, as we see in the middle of the play, a limited imagination. We cannot conceive of that which we cannot express.

MORTALITY

The one thing Faustus feels most imprisons him is his mortality. Death is an unacceptable limitation. If he could save men from death, he would, he says, be a doctor; if all men have to die, why enter Divinity? Yet, when he considers Magic he considers the rewards to be not eternal life, but "a world of profit and delight,

of power, of honour, of omnipotence." Although Faustus declared that the rewards of the law were too mercenary, the more he thinks of Magic, the more worldly benefits attract him.

Despite his harping on the limited life-span of man, he never asks Mephisto for everlasting life. He asks only for a span of 24 years. (There is a suggestion in the play that Faustus is a young man. In a sense, what he is doing in the beginning is deciding what he is going to "be when he grows up"; he asks for 24 years, and when desiring a woman, asks for a "wife.") It does not seem to occur to Faustus that in going outside the bounds of conventional limits he could attempt to shed the restrictions of the order altogether, the greatest being mortality. Surely, eternal life would automatically necessitate an adjustment in the entire system of values and set up a new set of definitions, one in which the boundaries, on all levels, would necessarily be expanded. Faustus not only assumes his own mortality to be immutable, but limits this most restrictive of all bonds, himself, to 24 years.

In the cosmology Faustus is rejecting for his greater individual freedom, mortality is carefully balanced by the boon of redemption. Death of the body and immortality of soul are concepts essential to the functioning of the system and inextricably linked. Faustus, however, pulls off an amazingly self-destructive coup: he not only insists on and circumscribes his own life-span, he also denies himself the right to "bliss without end." In this new "freedom" life is 24 years long, and body and soul are mortal.

What Faustus does is to translate the word "immortality" from its metaphysical to its physical meaning. Once he by-passes the idea of living forever, "immortality" becomes "fame". He is promised fame and fortune. His speeches are glutted with the names of those

whose reputations have outlived them. He himself states:

Whilst I am here on earth let me be cloyed
With all things that delight the heart of man.
My four and twenty years of liberty
I'll spend in pleasure and dalliance,
That Faustus' name, whilst this bright fame doth stand,
May be admired through the furthest land.¹¹

So one exchange he has made is spiritual immortality and a shortened life for mortal fame. The chorus speaks of his "fame spread forth in every land." But is it too much to hear an irony implied by the double meaning of the word when he asks, "Come, Helen, make me immortal with a kiss"?

The essential purpose of Faustus' "revolution" against the order he finds so restricting, is to redefine his relationship to society and the cosmos so he can find the scope to expand as an individual. He founds this on his own disbelief: "Come, I think Hell's a fable ... Thinkst thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine/ That after this life there is any pain?/ Tush, these are trifles and old wives tales." ¹² In theory, anyway, this seems to place him outside the system.

However, one may make a distinction between a social/cosmological world view and individual 'beliefs.' To repeat Mary Douglas, a world view consists of "unspoken assumptions" underlying any discourse ... the foundations on which social reality is constituted. It is an ordering of the components of existence into a hierarchical system of values. Inherent in this is the relation of the individual to his society. Any society, even one based on an individual-centred code, has inculcated in its members a world view confirming its

11. Act III, scene 2, lines 59-64, p295

12. Act I, scene 3, lines 130, 136-138, p289

ordering. In the case of a personalized society, this code and its implied ordering would confirm a vision of reality in which the individual gives meaning and morality to existence.

World view is not something overtly "taught" or believed in. It's generated from birth by the very act of growing up in that society. Unless the individual in some way conceives of and acts on an entirely different system in which the components of living are ordered in a different way, he is always acting within the cosmological system of his society. However, it is possible at any point to isolate any single component and consider it as a matter of personal "belief". This implies that one has a choice whether to accept this element or not. However, unless one is operating from a system in which the values given to the separate elements have been reassembled, re-ordered, one is still dealing with "belief" in terms of the old framework. To repeat, a re-ordering of all the components into a new order will necessarily entail a different speech code, a new language, to express these new relationships.

One sees in Faustus the problem engendered by personal "disbelief" in a system one still assumes. Faustus may protest that he does not "believe" in Hell, Heaven or the immortality of soul. He may actually not consciously believe it. But he does assume without question the essential dichotomy inherent in the cosmology, spirit versus matter, which implies its validity. He also assumes the implied system of rewards and punishment. His decision to align himself with the underworld is seen as one of matter over spirit. One might say that his choice is, partially at least, dictated by his inherent tendency to respond to immediate, physical experiences and their effect rather than imaginative, non-material concepts.

FAUSTUS: I think Hell's a fable
MEPH: Ay, think so still till experience change thy mind

FAUSTUS: Tush, these are trifles and old wives tales.
MEPH: But, Faustus, I am an instance to prove the contrary
For I tell thee I am damned and now in Hell.
FAUSTUS: How? Now in Hell? Nay, and this be Hell, I'll
willingly be damned here.
What? Sleeping, eating, walking and disputing?¹³

No matter how many times Mephisto tells Faustus that Hell is, in effect, a state of mind, Faustus seems unable to digest it. He asks, "Contrition, prayer, repentance, what of these?" These, too are states of mind, not overt actions. Throughout the play he is drawn to the sensual confirmation of material experience and confused by the locating of states of mind. Despite his apparent disbelief, his experience and actions all confirm the existence of both Heaven and Hell and the dichotomies they represent.

This is the basic irony of the play. In the beginning, Faustus chooses to act "outside" the system on the basis of his own "disbelief". However, he does this in the terms of the system which he is theoretically denying, thereby confirming it. Simply by entering the pact with Mephisto, he has confirmed the system. If Hell does not exist, then neither does Mephisto. If there is no soul to hand over, he cannot sign it away. If he can sign it away, then it exists. If he can call up Mephisto, then there is Hell. In his attempt to overcome the restrictions, Faustus binds himself more tightly to them. This is not lost on Mephistophilis: "I am an instance to prove the contrary."

Faustus has a propensity to need immediate results. When,
for example, he decides to repent:

13. Act I, scene 5, lines 130-131, 138-142, p283

Ah, Christ my Saviour
Seek to save distressed Faustus' soul.¹⁴

Faustus is turned from his intent by the manifestation of Lucifer and Beelzebub. He seals his devotion to them when they promise to gratify his desires and curiosity with the Seven Deadly Sins and a visit to Hell. Here we can see how Faustus' personal "disbelief" is set in the total acceptance of the cosmological order he has inherited. All he needs is confirmation by his senses. "Oh, might I see Hell and return again safe, how happy were I then."

It is ironic that a man who is dabbling in magic, supposedly a non-material art, should be so bound by what he can experience with his own senses. But isn't this exactly the state of affairs prescribed by his society? The choice is between sensual and spiritual, concrete and abstract, fact and symbol. With a strong recommendation to stick to the spiritual.

The choice of Magic in this cosmology dictates a natural alliance with things physical, material and sensual and necessarily brings damnation. Faustus accepts this as indisputable and acts it out. It is no accident that his last suggestion before Mephisto comes to him is "I'll burn my books". Faustus is a perfect product of his society's world view, but he has not ingested the more subtle features of it: he has totally absorbed the symbols but not the relationships between them. State of mind seems to elude him. He sees the final sacrifice in terms of the material representations of his actions, not the state of mind which brought and confined him there.

Perhaps this is why Faustus seems to have such difficulty

14. Act II, scene 1, lines 86-87, p288

over the problem of repentance. Repentance is the slip road by which one, once lost, can travel back onto the motorway of acceptance and integration. However, there are no sign posts. There is no definitive, prescribed, overt action one can take to guarantee one's destination.

REPENTANCE, DISORDER AND DESPAIR

One of the things holding Faustus back is his confusion about what to do: the rules do not seem clear about how to turn from the road of evil to the road of good. In the cosmology this area depends very much on the personal approach of the individual, and perhaps on his accepting all parts of the order as equally valid in relationship to each other. Faustus' individualistic approach is only a reversal of convention. Is he incapable of a truly personal action which would involve a change of emotional state?

This word 'damnation' terrifies not me, for
I confound Hell in elysium.
My ghost be with the old philosophers¹⁵

But a few lines later he says,

Seeing Faustus hath incurred eternal death
By desperate thoughts against Jove's deity¹⁶

15. Act I, scene 3, lines 58-60, p274

16. Act I, scene 3, lines 88-89, p275

And by Scene 5, Act I:

Now, Faustus, must thou need be damned?
And canst thou be saved?
... abjure this magic, turn to God again.
Ay, and Faustus will turn to God again.
To God? He loves thee not
The God thou servest is thine own appetite,
Wherein is fixed the love of Beelzebub
To him I'll build an altar and a church ... 17

Faustus' inability to conceive of a value system different and more expansive for himself than the one that already exists prevents him from reaping the ultimate benefits of the one he acts in. In the speech above we see how Faustus is limited by the terms he uses. The choice is either/or. He desires salvation but the terms are ambiguous. He has chosen himself over society and God, "The God thou servest is thine own appetite"; whereas his society values the whole over the parts. This, in his terms, necessarily excludes him from the social order and therefore God. To love himself more is to align himself with the devil. He therefore takes the symbols of the association between God and society and transfers them to the devil: church and altar. Faustus does not deny the significance of altars and churches. He simply reverses their context.

From the beginning, this is the essence of Faustus' revolt: not to deny the basic assumptions by which society sets its system of values, but to reverse the terms. Professions are described as "odious, obscure, base"; Divinity, "unpleasant, harsh, contemptible and vile". He gives "prayers and sacrifices" to the devil. But the inherent meaning of these terms is never questioned. The necessity and significance of "prayers, sacrifices, churches and altars" never doubted.

17. Act I, scene 5, lines 1-2, 8-13, p278/9

The proper functioning of any order guarantees its health. Like the body, 'impurities' give rise to disease. Purity indicates a healthy order. The ultimate aim of any order would, theoretically, be the health and cleanliness of its system reflected by the health of its parts. Faustus' continual wavering between his commitment to hell and his desire for salvation, his imbalance of action to the material side, his absolute inability to have the kind of lasting effect of action he so desired when the play opened, are all symptoms of disorder. An illness, the experience of which is called despair.

My heart's so hardened I cannot repent,
Scarce can I name salvation, faith or heaven,
But fearful echoes thunder in mine ears
'Faustus thou art damned.' Then words and knives,
Poisons, guns, halters and envenomed steel
Are laid before me to dispatch myself.
And long ere this I should have done the deed,
Had not sweet pleasure conquered deep despair.
Have I not made blind Homer sing to me ...¹⁸

Against the weight of the foregoing lines, it is obvious that Homer's song and its pleasure are consolation prizes. We hear the same again in Act IV, Scene 5:

What are thou, Faustus, but a man condemned to die?
Thy fatal time doth draw to a final end;
Despair doth drive distrust into my thoughts.
Confound these passions with a quiet sleep.
Tush, Christ did call the thief upon the cross;
Then rest thee, Faustus, quiet in conceit.¹⁹

The power of words like "condemned, die, fatal, final end, despair, drive, distrust" outweighs the theoretical consolation of the last two lines, especially with the introductory "Tush". The most powerful statement is that Faustus is to die. The pleasure he has had, cold comfort. Redemption, a faint hope. He despairs. Despair is a

18. Act II, scene 1, lines 18-26, p285

19. Act IV, scene 5, lines 41-46, p318/9

debilitating illness, alienating him from God, from society, and, as he suggests, turning him against himself. The old man has a "cure":

I see an angel hover o'er thy head,
And with a vial full of precious grace,
Offers to pour the same into thy soul,
Then call for mercy and avoid despair.²⁰

The medicine is prescribed and ready and Faustus recognises this:

... I feel thy words
To comfort my distressed soul.
Leave me for a while to ponder on my sins.²¹

But again, he loses out by reversing the order. The prescription is to "ponder" on God. The overriding symbolism of the system is the process towards light; God reigns over all, and the place of man is to aspire upwards, towards purification. The old man can see the angel; his purity is such that Mephisto "cannot touch his soul." But Faustus, personal will still overriding the very concepts by which he describes it, centres his thoughts on himself, damning himself by the very system he wishes to override. "Accursed Faustus, wretch, what has thou done." He thinks not on God but on himself. Its no wonder the old man "fears the ruin of thy hopeless soul".

Repentance is the cure society offers, and Faustus accepts this. But repentance is only viable if the entire scheme is seen as a functioning, inter-connected whole. By committing himself to the underside of the order, and focusing on himself as "outside" this order, he is unable to see himself as part of the whole and therefore open to its benefits. Repentance is a state of mind; there are no prescribed actions. It is not a question of what you do, but, so to

20. Act V, scene 1, lines 59-64, p329

21. Act V, scene 1, lines 63-35, p329

speak, where you look. "Fix your eyes on God". At each opportunity, however, Faustus looks down.

Although his original complaint was of the restrictions within the system of the material over the spiritual, he has put himself in a position where he has total material freedom at the expense of the spirit. Exactly the opposite of what he intended! His attraction to and absorption in material benefits: - wealth, power, fame - is the direct result of his complete acceptance of the values inherent in the existing order. He limits himself within its assumptions of cause and effect. By concentrating on the reality of the descent, Faustus denies the counterbalancing movement, thereby condemning himself.

The advantage damnation has over repentance is that damnation is so tangible and definite. There is a certain comfort about knowing where the bottom is. Whereas Heaven remains a vague but pressing promise, the tortures of Hell are described in unmistakable detail, and Faustus never tires of listening to them. Though he desires the ultimate gift of Heaven, its symbols hold less power than the symbols of damnation.

This suggests a serious weakness in the system as a whole. Certainly its strength lies in the powerful hold it has over the imagination and language of its participants: even Faustus cannot conceive of a different way of organising reality. However, its weakness seems to lie in the attractiveness and vividness of the symbols representing its darker, anti-social side.

THE MIDDLE SECTION: FAUSTUS' SIDE OF THE BARGAIN

Here we see what Faustus gets for his soul and what he does with his magic. On the whole, he gains nothing from his bargain. He makes no lasting effect. He uses his powers, generally, to play tricks. In exchange for his soul, Faustus obtains total material freedom: he can materialize and dematerialize, grow extra limbs, travel in an instant. However, this knowledge is obtained without understanding. To put it another way, he has leapt into a position for which he is totally unprepared, either in terms of gradual progress through an acknowledged series of actions or by training. In this sense, Faustus has really bucked the system! However, since he still sees both himself and the world around him in terms of the value system he has by-passed, he is still literally all dressed up with nowhere to go.

His newfound knowledge is not integrated into a system where it can take effect. It also lacks the wisdom of progressive integration. Faustus is a child with the strength of an adult and as a result does childish things as feats of strength: nicks the Pope's dinner, shows off, gets even. Having put himself outside the established order without having established an alternative, he has no context in which his actions can take effect. In his actions and attitudes Faustus even confirms the social hierarchy. He belittles, frightens and punishes those who are of a lower social status than himself while seeking to impress and be flattered by those of higher social rank. He sees the Pope as a figure of authority and takes great pleasure in teasing him. Benvolio, a social inferior, he can release his wrath upon. Thus he confirms his society's ordering of personal worth in terms of social status.

The middle section seems to be a manifestation of Faustus' belief that only the material world is manipulable; or, perhaps more accurately, a manifestation of Faustus' own limiting of his powers by employing the terms of the order he is seeking to transcend. Even his imagination is restricted by the terms by which he defines his world. He can bring back phantoms from the past, have devils for his entertainment, but he can make no mark. All his actions are outside what he understands to be the essential workings of reality and therefore cannot affect it. Instead of restructuring his model of existence and placing, for example, himself at the centre, Faustus sees the existing order as stronger than he is. Ultimately, he is only one of its parts (the place of the individual in the strong group/grid system), and as such is unable to change it effectively. He can worry it, tease it, distract it. But he cannot move it or change it. He gains a reputation for the manipulation of surfaces, but by paying tribute to the hierarchy, soliciting the flattery of Emperor and Duke.

It is a much different Faustus calling up Alexander and growing a new leg than the dedicated, tormented man who wished to bring his talents to bear on society and found it wanting. At the beginning, Faustus is concerned with the naming of things, the discovery of limitation and effect. By Act IV he seems given over to a kind of hedonism, a frantic scuffle after his own gratification: a tetchy, arrogant man punishing slights violently, consuming flattery. Is he drowning out the sound of his own mortality which at the end of the Act so painfully troubles him? He has neither reassessed nor replaced the established order and its automatic punishments and rewards, but merely set it aside. Since he never redefines the basis of existence, everything he says and does confirms it. As my father

used to say "You can't eat your cake and not have it." The only way to become free of the problem is to redefine your relationship to the cake.

Society, however clumsily, must see itself as a collection of individuals. But there is no guarantee that the individual will see himself as a part of that society. Faustus carries society's image of itself in himself. He defines every thing in its terms and acts within its context. He also sees himself as outside and beyond it and theoretically not adherent to its rules. Certainly, in its definition of material reality, he defies it by associating himself with the dark side of the picture. However, he still sees himself as bound by its value system (he still sees his side as the "dark side") and the rewards and punishments inherent in it.

THE SCHOLARS

Unquestioning acceptance of the conventional norms rests with the Scholars. They assume Faustus to be a part of the integrated whole like themselves and say the conventional things about his proposed actions. Faustus' removal from their midst does not change them. Five acts later, they are in the same place doing and thinking the same things. But Faustus has changed, and we gauge his change through them.

In Act I, they see Faustus as a slightly superior version of themselves. They expect him to do better than they do but in their terms. However, he obviously feels that what is sufficient for them is not good enough for him.

In Act V, Scene 2, Faustus returns to the fold and for the first time reaches out to other men. Undoubtedly, he expects condemnation from these representatives of the status quo. But for the

first time, Faustus receives some of the benefits of being part of humanity: compassion, sympathy, concern. He has hankered after the immortal and in the material world been as unrestricted as a god. In his own terms, by doing this, he has given up his humanity and its attendant rights. He speaks of his "soul's death". He condemns himself by conventional standards. The scholars themselves are much less definite. With them, Faustus becomes human again. He has a soul.

When he tells the scholars what he has done, he uses prose. This narrative form gives an air of finality and completion to his story. When he describes himself, he uses the original symbol of good and evil, the symbolic foundation of the established order: Adam and Eve. "The serpent that tempted Eve may be saved, but not Faustus."²² Faustus identifies with and condemns himself by using the symbol of original sin, thus placing himself firmly within the established value system, investing its symbols with meaning and giving himself and his actions the weight of precedence. He has, in a way, finally found a place for himself; he is the representative of original sin. Ironically, Faustus has succeeded in his original quest to overcome the limits of definition: he has found a place for himself that exceeds those normally set by his society for the achievement of an individual. He has become, in his own terms, a metaphor for the system itself.

There is a fundamental tension between Faustus' intentions and his accomplishments. Although his purpose is to discredit and overcome the system, he is consistently confirming the system while invalidating himself. In the scene with the Scholars, he confronts

22. Act V, scene 2, lines 44-45, p333

these representatives of the society he has never truly abandoned, accepts its terms, and sets himself firmly within it.

The grand battle raging within Faustus between belief and non-belief, between spirit and matter, has never, in a sense, externally existed. By defining both camps in the same terms, by describing his disbelief in terms which confirm the accepted belief system, he has, in fact, shown that he has always believed. Here, with the Scholars, he publicly comes to terms with this belief. His internal battle resolved, his energy can then be used in the final confrontation rather than the hopeless battle against himself.

THE FINAL SPEECH

Having met and/or manifested the perfect opposite to himself, an old man to whom spirit is reality and the material world, immaterial, Faustus places himself firmly in the context of his society's world view. He takes his place in the world order, aligned to the Dark against the Light. Mephisto and the Angels confirm this with their final pronouncements.

Faustus reiterates the hierarchy and the relationships of the order: the "evermoving spheres of Heaven", day and night, the functioning of time and its effect on man.

The heavens, earth and man take their allotted places. He calls on the stars that reigned at his birth, cursing destiny, the very fact of his existence, and then says, "Curse thyself, curse Lucifer/ That hath deprived thee of the joys of Heaven"²³, implying both his internalization of the symbol of darkness and his identification with Lucifer that started when he first haggled with Mephisto-

23. Act V, scene 2, lines 291-292, p.337

philis over who was in charge.

Here is the man who sold his soul for knowledge. But what has he learned? Everything he has not changed confronts him in as oppressive a form as it confronted him at the beginning of the play but now invested with all its symbolic meaning. Faustus achieves the final punishment he forecast for himself. Here, in a sense, he achieves his individuality. He is singled out for damnation.

Despite his great need for salvation, Faustus is still unable, throughout the last speech, to keep his mind on the higher echelons of the hierarchy. The darker images still draw him to them. In his vision of Christ, he calls on Lucifer!

"Ah, Mephistophilis!" Although this is usually interpreted as a final cry of pain, one wonders whether it might not be one of recognition, a great sigh of completion. (Better the devil you know...) Faustus has always been in Hell. Having rejected a place in the accepted system but found no alternative system in which he has value and his actions have effect, he has been condemned to live in perpetual condemnation, without confirmation or acceptance. Having placed himself outside the accepted order while still believing that it is the only "natural" order, the order "blessed by Heaven", Faustus has suffered damnation by isolation; like Mephistophilis, he has "seen the face of God" and lived forever with the knowledge of its absence, fruitlessly seeking the joys of confirmation and inclusion. Finally, the general consensus confirms his own experience. Hell exists and he is in it. "Where Hell is there must we ever be." His inner experience is confirmed in outward manifestation. He is at one with himself. Justice reigns. The order is confirmed.

The play begins with everything in its place according to a

known system of ordering. It ends with everything in its place, as prescribed by the established order. Were it not for the Scholars and the Chorus, who carry and give form to Faustus' story, the world would be unchanged. In between, Faustus attempts to bring into being a personal system where his will will make new form. However, it is merely the old system in reverse. By attempting to deny the old system by using its own terms, adhering to its values and using its symbols, Faustus brings disorder, not to society, but to himself. The tree survives; it is the "branch" that was cut.

One cannot change the order without changing the ordering. In an attempt to impose a system more relevant to his individual needs, Faustus sets the old order on its head only to find that it still holds together in exactly the same fashion as it did right side up. So he is still answerable to its value system and still directed by and invested with meaning through its symbols. However, in his struggle, he has also exposed serious weaknesses in the system itself: its inability to contain the exceptional individual, he who has the will to exceed, within the workings of the system; the overbalanced immediacy and attractiveness of its negative, anti-social, darker side in relation to its positive ideals; and, perhaps most important, the area in which the rules, usually so exacting, are less tangibly laid down, the one great area where personal choice, not developed in the system itself, is essential: the question of redemption and its propensity to confusion.

Perhaps one could go a step further and suggest that on the structural level, Tragedy touches on the political. "Ordering" is a political action. Faustus' dilemma suggests the re-ordering must entail a different system of relationships, a restructuring of the hierarchy of value, and the establishment of meaningful symbols which

encompass those values. Renaming, or a simple reversal of the components of the order one wishes to "reform" will inevitably lead in the end to the continuation and confirmation of the old order under a different name.

Dr. Faustus provides the context by which the implicit truths that form the "natural" order are exposed and elaborated, and through this process adds new, elaborated vocabulary to its discussion. To speak of Faustus is to speak in a new, concise way of Man's relationship to the world; a way of speaking of the workings of the system, the implicit ordering of reality and values, which was not part of the general vocabulary before the explicit elaboration of this order which is Faustus' story.

The story moves from the individual to the symbolic where Faustus becomes an archetype, an image of a pattern of action and relationships which is transferable to other times and places, whereby it is incorporated into the symbolic language. Reclassification takes place; the order is changed as well as the language that speaks it. That is to say, simplistically, Faustus' story was once merely a bizarre, personal story. Its elaboration through the construct of Tragedy sets it in an active context extending beyond the immediate example, isolating the pattern and making it speakable, thinkable and therefore meaningful in social, moral and cosmological terms.²⁴ The implicit assumptions underlying the order have been exposed and discussed, releasing the restrictions on the language code. Thus, Tragedy functions as an elaborated code through which the workings of the system and the individual's functions in it may be

24. We still use the term "selling out" to refer to the exchange of abstract or spiritual values for immediate material gain.

examined and analysed through the complex interaction of language and action.

In this light, the traditional critical conundrum over an avowed atheist writing what appear to be a dogmatic Christian tract is no longer an issue. "Christianity" is show to be, not the subject matter of the play, but the terminology by which the social/moral/cosmological analysis is carried out.

Nor is Tragedy, contrary to popular opinion, a confirmation of the status quo. Functioning as an elaborated code, it makes the implicit explicit. Its active social purpose is to inspect the shared, self-evident assumptions on which that system is based and thereby assess and reorganise the terms, both literal and symbolic, by which the order is spoken, understood and defined. In this manner, Tragedy stands in critical relation to the accepted system of ordering and becomes an active part in the process and language of restructuring.

APPENDIX - PROLOGUE TO FAUSTUS

I have isolated the Prologue because application of the model shows that it deals not with Faustus and his world, but with Marlowe and his. The Prologue functions both as a dramatic device and as a communication device between Marlowe and his audience.

Dramatically, the Prologue sets a series of distancing devices. Ideally, at the end of a Tragedy, the spectator is in a position of "compassionate judgement":

"... in all of the tragedies, our response becomes detached ... We stand back from the tragic hero and contemplate him from outside in woe and wonder ..."²⁵

This blend of involvement and detachment allows the spectator an over-vision, a superimposition of what IS over what COULD HAVE BEEN which, arguably, leads to the unique experience of Catharsis (More at a later date). The impact of Tragedy might be said to be the experience of Pattern.

Complete identification with the hero would arguably interfere with the experience of the pattern as a whole. Thus, it is necessary for the playwright to build into his work "distancing effects" to prevent the spectator from merging with the hero and thus losing capacity for judgement. However, this separation between the audience and the hero must be contrived without losing the audience's compassion for the hero and involvement with the story. Each playwright, of course, uses means suited to his needs and the demands of his construct.

The Prologue to Faustus introduces several methods. First, by telling the story before it begins, Marlowe directs audience

25. Honigman, E.A.J., Shakespeare, Seven Tragedies, Macmillan (London) 1980, page 193

attention towards process rather than intrigue. Second, he makes a direct appeal for their "judgement" - 'Now to patient judgement we appeal' - openly stating the detached relationship necessary to constructively comment rather than engaging them uncritically in the action. Third, he tells the story as if it has already taken place, implying that what they see is a *fait accompli* and cannot be changed.

Lastly, as Brecht recommends²⁶, he makes the "normal" unusual by exposing the underlying assumptions regarding the genre. Marlowe's Prologue announces to the audience that he is denying their expectations of what a Tragedy is. He specifically distinguishes Faustus from the normal run of heroes in terms of personal history, generic definitions, and the type of action in which Faustus engages.

Personally, Faustus is an average man. He is neither a mythic hero, given status by the weight of time and the retelling that has preceded the play, nor a lover nor a warrior. In the accepted parameters of the genre, Faustus hasn't the credentials to be a Tragic hero.

At this point, the dramatic and social functions of the Prologue coincide. The Prologue's second function is to expose and readjust the established classification system. By setting Faustus in relation to the existing order and redefining the terms to include Faustus, it reconstructs the order and reclassifies its components.

The suggestion that the action has already occurred places Faustus' story in a time scheme where it assumes the weight of history. By setting Faustus in the heroic mode, Marlowe attaches to him and his story all the expectations associated with the definition of

26. Brecht, Bertolt, Brecht on Theatre. Trans. John Willett, Methuen (London) 1964, page 71

"hero". Marlowe stresses, however, that Faustus does not possess any of the characteristics and/or background traditionally necessary for classification in this category. Faustus has neither the status of myth, nor the glamour of lover or warrior. In addition, he is from a humble home. Despite Faustus' obvious disabilities regarding his qualification as "hero", Marlowe insists that Faustus is a Tragic hero and, as such, has a place within the established hierarchy of assumed, implicit values. The Prologue functions to expose the terms of this hierarchical system of classification and qualification and broaden it to include Faustus, despite his apparent ineligibility.

Marlowe specifically sets Faustus' life within the natural, expected order of the life process. His parents are of humble origin. He went to school, studied, won a scholarship to University. There is nothing unique about his history or background. In all ways but one Faustus is unexceptional. In intellectual achievement, Faustus "excels all". Only in the workings of the mind is Faustus distinguishable from the general run of similar histories. Since Faustus is exceptional in the realm of intellectual activity, this is where his story must take place. This area, in the workings of the mind, is where Marlowe stakes his claim for Faustus' candidacy for heroism.

The manner in which Marlowe describes Faustus in the Prologue implies that thought and its manifestations have not traditionally been considered the stuff from which heroism was forged. Marlowe makes an explicit bid to readjust the implicit classification system to include intellectual activity and imagination in the accepted field of "heroic action". Marlowe claims that the mind and its linguistic manifestations are activities which have power, force and effect. Like excellence and extremity in the battlefield, excellence

and extremity in the field of thought and its expressions are valid context for "heroic" action and valid matter for Tragedy.

Marlowe's Prologue exposes through elaboration the underlying assumptions of the classification system of the genre in order to adjust its terms and expand its parameters to include Faustus.

The Elizabethan/Jacobean dramas that follow Faustus are proof of Marlowe's success, based, as they are, on the implicit assumption that thought, language and image are powerful activities that have far-reaching effects. Their use of verse itself is implicit verification. Their assumption that the power of thought and language is self-evident is a debt they owe to Marlowe.

TAMBERLAINE: LOOK ON MY WORKS YE MIGHTY¹

A "personalised" world view is not simply "selfishness" (itself a relative term). A personalised cosmology is an ordering of existence where all meaning is centred on the individual. In the personalised universe, the only consensus is the sacredness of the individual. Rewards, punishments, values, meaning and language, all symbolic forms which communicate meaning, are assumed to be the tools of the individual to order, make meaningful and communicate his unique experiences. Since there is no overall consensus except the importance of personal worth, success becomes the ultimate value, success and self-expression, the ultimate justification.

To achieve that success, however, the individual must impress upon the other individuals his vision and worth. A major problem when the individual is the signifying criteria is acquiring public acknowledgement of one's unique significance. Success in imposing one's own reality on others is genuine success; one's actions become justified and meaningful both to oneself and others, and one becomes a standard of values.

Tamberlaine's personalised vision breaks asunder an established G/G world where tradition, class history and heredity give meaning to the actions of man. He succeeds where Faustus and Macbeth fail, restructuring the world to speak of himself as centre and standard. Applied to Tamberlaine, the model provides not only a basis for comparative interpretation and performance but also a new perspective on formerly assumed "difficulties" in the play revealing a remarkable consistency of form, a sense of humour, and an active

1. Textual quotations from: Marlowe, Christopher, Tamberlaine. Christopher Marlowe, The Complete Works, ed. J. B. Steane, Penguin 1978

linguistic contribution. In other words, it reveals a perspective which transforms the play from a static series of pontifications to an active, intensive process of dramatic confrontation.

Marlowe's Tamberlaine is not an uncivilised gorilla of the Tarter hoards tearing to shreds the delicate foundations of civilisation. He is the encapsulation of a new cosmology. The way Tamberlaine sees and interprets the world and sets himself within it enables him to act as he does; the complementary countervision of his opponents allows him to succeed.

Marlowe extends Tamberlaine's power beyond mere aggression by giving him the capacity to communicate his vision. Tamberlaine is not only a warrior, but a poet; speaker and maker of metaphor, creator of symbols. He reconstructs the cosmos giving the highest value to individual uniqueness, personal worth. He changes the relationship of man to the universe, reevaluating actions, investing words and symbols with new meanings. At his death, however, "Heaven and earth ... fade", for even Tamberlaine cannot withstand the most definitive quality of mankind: he is mortal. Having made the world in his own image, peopled it with his people, and made it meaningful through his symbols, when he dies, this world dies with him.

Although there are nine acts of almost unmitigated success and only one where the weaknesses inherent in his vision turn all to dust, enticed by the compelling power of his progress, one cannot help sharing Marlowe's grief as he realizes the limitations of his beautiful new vision.

In *G/A*, meaning resides in a whole larger than its parts, assuming relevance beyond the life of the single person. Although the part is lost, the whole goes on; history and tradition tell the tale of its longevity. When one man becomes the world, his unique

qualities giving it relevance and interpretation, this meaning and the language that speaks it die with him. (Hence, perhaps the shadow of Alexander hovering over Marlowe's early plays).

The action of Tamberlaine is played out on a gigantic scale. Both the Kings of the East and Tamberlaine weave long passages packed with the names of distant lands, creating the sense that the entire world, further than the eye can see or ear can hear, is mobilised into this battle. Each conjures for himself the support of lands both real and legendary. This is more than a battle for temporal power. What is at stake is absolute supremacy over the meaning of existence: the interpretation of reality. It is a war for control over meaning. The winner may define the relationship of man to the universe, define the meaning of life, and create the language and symbols by which it will be spoken.

STRONG GROUP/GRID: THE KINGS OF ORIENT

The representatives of the known world who become Tamberlaine's opponents are obviously representatives of a closely ordered strong group/grid system. As Kings and Emperors they are the heads of social and political hierarchies as well as the symbolic representatives of the functioning and rightness of their system. Their major concerns are the boundaries which identify their groups and the protection of their roles as symbolic representatives of each group as whole. From these elements they derive their personal power.

On the horizontal plane they are also a functioning group based on class, tradition and hierarchy, sharing similar histories, tradition, values and aims: mainly to keep their power and maintain the status quo. When Bajazeth, Emperor of the Turks, brings to his aid the Kings he himself has conquered, although they are now beneath

him in rank and power, they obviously think of themselves as part of a group with a common history and intentions, sharing the same definitions and interpretations of reality. They call on their rank as Kings to muster the assistance of those beneath them to fight with Bajazeth against Tamberlaine.

Thus, Tamberlaine's opponents function as strong G/G on both a vertical and a horizontal plane, both as representatives of their respective societies and as a cohesive group representing a specific class and rank, sharing, at both levels, a cosmological view where the group is primary and where man is defined and given meaning by his role and its relationship to the whole.

The underlying function of a world view, so to speak, is to give meaning to life; to place man in a context which defines him and allows effective action; to establish a hierarchy of values which organises experience and provides a structure of underlying values in which Important is automatically sifted from Irrelevant. The Kings of Asia are the embodiment of a world view in which rank is automatically assumed to be worth, in which geographical boundaries are revered by time-honoured tradition and have assumed symbolic importance speaking of the shape and meaning of the physical universe. Worth, power and value are automatically invested in the symbols representing them and the meaning shared. In their world Tamberlaine does not, in fact, cannot, exist.

Scythia, an extremely minor province with no historical significance, is an insignificant place whose people are at best faceless pawns. A shepherd, having no rank, power, or title, is irrelevant. And a "Scythian shepherd" ... well!

Exclusiveness is a major weakness in this cosmology and the main cause of its downfall. Its inability to credit any actions

outside its fixed rules or any being outside its boundaries - its inability to acknowledge the "reality" of Tamberlaine - makes its representatives unable to assess the situation and take effective action. In their reality, it is inconceivable that a Scythian shepherd could challenge, never mind defeat, their armies, take over their roles, and change their time-honoured boundaries, altering the shape and meaning of the world. Even at the last battle, when Tamberlaine has defeated them all, Callapine comes to the dying Tamberlaine convinced that Destiny will confirm the "rightness of this claim." So perhaps it is not surprising that the sight of Tamberlaine, though he is at Death's door, the reality of Tamberlaine face-to-face, frightens the entire army into retreat. Although Callapine had been Tamberlaine's prisoner, Tamberlaine the King and warrior, so to speak, was not a reality. Callapine's world view had never allowed for the possibility of Tamberlaine's existence as an equal. The sight of Tamberlaine with all the power and majesty he amassed through the play, though the man himself is near to death, shatters Callapine's assumptions about the values he has taken for granted.

These Kings are the ultimate symbols of the efficacy of their world and the way in which its components are organised. Their actions are justified by the good of the whole they represent and by the extensive tradition which confirms their positions. The system does not even allow for the possibility of a Tamberlaine. Their inability to even recognise Tamberlaine as a serious threat, nevermind a dangerous adversary, makes them impotent against him. The great weakness is, as Arden says of Lindsay, that they cannot "take seriously the gravity of another man's violence". They simply do not believe in his presence. Their defence rests primarily on their unshakeable belief in their own "god-given" powers, their right to

rule. Tamberlaine is an aberration that the will of The Gods, the power of Fate, the natural laws will automatically wipe off the map.

MEANDER: the sturdy Scythian thief ...
That robs your merchants of Persepolis
And in your confines with his lawless train
Daily commits uncivil outrages,
Hoping (misled by dreaming prophecies)
To reign in Asia, and with barbarous arms
To make himself the monarch of the East.²

MYCETES: that paltry Scythian

One can almost hear the laughter! Perhaps one can forgive them for their disbelief in the beginning, but, they never learn. Their ideas about Tamberlaine himself are a collection of clichés which essentially speak of their own value and superiority in contrast with his innate inferiority.

This country swarms with vile outrageous men
That live by rapine and by lawless spoil
Fit soldiers for the wicked Tamberlaine³

Dismissed by the ultimate judgement "wicked", Tamberlaine's worth is not even negotiable. Only animals and insects (swarms) can possibly acknowledge him to have any validity.

COSROE: What means this devilish shepherd, to spire
With such giantly presumption⁴

ORTYGIUS: What god, or field or spirit of the earth ...
Govern him ... such a devilish thief⁵

The choice of words is crucial. Throughout the play, Tamberlaine is seen both as too low to merit any serious recognition and as something outside the human, beyond the pale. Since their view of man and his relation to the universe is based on an agreed hierarchy

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2. Part I, Act I, scene 1, lines 36-43, page 106
 3. Part I, Act II, scene 2, lines 22-24, p122
 4. Part I, Act 1, scene 6, lines 1-3, p131
 5. Part I, Act II, scene 6, lines 15-20, p131

where rank speaks of worth as does the group in which one has a place, Tamberlaine, having no acceptable rank and coming from an insignificant group, has no viable place in the system. Since his behaviour is not commensurate with their idea of how someone in his place should behave, they place him outside the system altogether. Not in the sense that he is TRULY outside the system, that is, acting in terms of an entirely different set of values - but outside meaning.

It should be obvious that the only way to win against a powerful opponent is to take his power and demands seriously. By swinging wholesale between seeing Tamberlaine as so inferior he is insignificant (animal/insect) and seeing him as the embodiment of evil (devil/giant), the Kings have put themselves in a position where they must continuously be incapable of judging his actions and of countering with efficacious action of their own.

In Act III, scene 1, there is constant emphasis on Bajazeth's "natural might". This "god-given" power has been reinforced by his own conquests of the Kings of Arglar, Fax and Morocco who, as a result, now owe fealty to him and continually reconfirm his innate power and majesty.

BAJAZETH: The Tartars and the eastern thieves ...⁶
Our army is invincible⁷ (Because, we should point
out, it is HIS)
Lest he incur the fury of my wrath ...⁸ (Next to
the wrath of the Emperor of Turkey,
Tamberlaine couldn't possibly stand a chance!)
Tell him I am content to take a truce,
Because I hear he bears a valiant mind;

6. Part I, Act III, scene 2, line 2, p134

7. ibid line 7, p135

8. ibid, line 30, p135

But if, presuming on his silly power
He be so mad to manage arms with me ...⁹

KING OF ARGIER: For all flesh quakes at your magnificence..

BAJAZETH: True, Argier, and trembles at my looks
...And all the trees are blasted with
our breaths...¹⁰

These words speak for themselves. Bajazeth's concession to Tamberlaine's "mind" which he makes so charitably from his certainty of insuperable superiority is reinforced by "presuming" and that wonderful, disconsonant "silly". It ends up as a mutual admiration society which sends Bajazeth, encouraged by the ever increasing flattery of his minions, over the top speaking his true belief in his absolute invulnerability - dragon of the gods.

When Bajazeth, King of Kings, meets Tamberlaine face-to-face before the battle, they have what appears to be a slanging match:

BAJAZETH: King of Fez, Morocco and Argier
He calls me Bajazeth, whom you call lord!
Note the presumption of this Scythian slave!
I tell thee, villain, those that lead my horse
Have to their names title of dignity,
And darest thou bluntly call me Bajazeth?¹¹

What Bajazeth seems to be doing is trying to establish, verbally, the rightful pecking order, and with his minions, he succeeds:

FEZ: What means the mighty Turkish Emperor,
To talk with one so base as Tamberlaine.

MOR: How can ye suffer these indignities?¹²

But in reality, it has little effect. Although he reinforces what already is, he does not do what he intends, which is to put Tamber-

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9. ibid, lines 31-34, p136
10. ibid, lines 48-55, p136
11. Part I, Act III, scene 3. lines 66-71, p142
12. ibid, lines 87-90, p143

laine in his "place". Not only that, but the entire scene emphasises the inability of the Kings, as a unit, to adapt their interpretation of events to their experience of them. All they seem able to do is reinforce the status quo. For Tamberlaine does, indeed, call Bajazeth by his name! His actions are, though judged as presumptions, actual, and Bajazeth is indeed talking to him as an equal! Tamberlaine's reply itself elaborates on Bajazeth's words by sending them back in a different context, emphasising change and the future rather than unquestioned traditions of the past:

TAMBE: And know thou, Turk, that those which lead my horse
Shall lead thee captive through Africa
And dar'est thou bluntly call me Tamberlaine?¹³

This essential battle of definitions, this question of whether worthiness is ascribed by tradition or earned as a reward for inner worth is one of the mainsprings of the play.

It is exceptionally difficult to hold a fruitful discussion with someone who assumes different meaning and values to the words and concepts you are using. Bajazeth orders Tamberlaine to stay out of Africa. However, since Tamberlaine does not acknowledge the same significance, meaning and boundaries that Bajazeth represents and takes for granted, he cannot recognise Bajazeth's authority. There is no basis for communication.

As Mycetes says, Tamberlaine, to the others, is a "thief". In his innocence, Mycetes touchingly translates the word literally; someone who steals his goods. Obviously, to "steal" in this sense would be anathema to Tamberlaine whose most essential precept is that everything must be EARNED. Mycetes may wonder, but it is no wonder to us. By definition, Tamberlaine is not entitled to anything in the

13. ibid, lines 72-74, p142

eyes of the Kings and the society they represent. Therefore, everything he EARNs is a theft.

SOLDAN: sturdy felon, base-bred thief, by murder raised ...
the crown ... a blemish to the majesty and high
estate ... that such a base usurping vagabond should
wear a princely crown.¹⁴

Tamberlaine's Kingship reflects on them. Their honour is at stake when they deign to fight with him. By joining their ranks he has defiled them! By thus changing the meaning of their rank and the definition of their group, he changes their meaning and value. These two systems of values are mutually exclusive: one necessarily denies the existence of the other. The Kings cannot speak of Tamberlaine's validity in their language, for the ultimate purpose of this language is to speak of their own.

Thus, by IV-I, the Soldan is reduced to name-calling. If one accepted the same values as the Soldan, to be spoken of like this might very well quell one's enthusiasm. But since Tamberlaine does not accept the assumptions underlying the words, they are hardly likely to phase him:

Merciless villain, peasant, ignorant
Of lawful arms of martial discipline!
Fillage and murder are his usual trades;
The salve usurps the glorious name of war ...¹⁵

SABINA: Unworthy king, that by thy cruelty
Unlawfully usurp'st the Persian seat¹⁶

Now, one might ask oneself, how do you "lawfully" usurp? This is not merely a figure of speech, for Bajazeth himself "lawfully" usurped, having taken sovereignty over the lesser Kings by exactly the same

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14. Part I, Act IV, scene 3, lines 12-22, p156
15. Part I, Act IV, scene 1, lines 65-68, p151
16. Part I, Act IV, scene 2, lines 57-58, p153

means that Tamberlaine uses, and, for that matter, Coorse does the same. The Soldan tells us there are "rules" to war. One must be a professional, have established and accepted means of military discipline and action. Someone not born to the elite cannot "lawfully" make war. Despite Tamberlaine's excellence in the battle field, he gives war a bad name since he is neither born of the right class nor uses the correct procedures.

This is not an unfamiliar argument. History reeks of battles lost by an insistence on precedence over practicality. With the kings burying their heads firmly in the sand, Tamberlaine, against the very precepts of reality, does fight them and win! His people do lead Bajazeth captive through Africa; he keeps "his Kingly body in a cage", treads "him beneath his loathsome feet, whose feet the Kings of Africa have kissed." There is no room in the way the Kings see the world for these facts to be included. Even their own experience is not enough for them to adapt the way they interpret existence and adapt their actions accordingly.

Tamberlaine does not assume that the role and its power and majesty are naturally ascribed. To Tamberlaine they are earned by the man who best deserves them, whose actions, being commensurate with his inner worth, achieves them as rewards.

Thy names and titles and thy dignities
Are fled from Bajazeth and remain with me,
That will maintain it 'gainst a world of Kings. ¹⁷

SOLDAN ... the bloody Tamberlaine
A sturdy felon and a base-born thief,
My murder raised to the Persian crown. ¹⁸

(You may ask yourself, how did they get theirs?)

17. Part I, Act IV, scene 2, lines 79-81, p154

18. Part I, Act IV, scene 3, lines 11-13, p156

... It is a blemish to the majesty
And high estate of mighty emperors,
That such a base usurping vagabond
Should brave a King, or wear a princely crown.¹⁹

The most basic questions of classification and definition are at stake. How is the world put together? Where does meaning come from? If Kingship carries with it natural qualities which are invested in anyone by virtue of wearing the crown, then Tamberlaine cannot be a King. If Tamberlaine can not only "brave" a King, but war against him, win and take the crown, and - not only that - but once crowned, have followers, exercise power and have that power recognised, then the entire context, the value system by which sense is made of these terms, has changed. The only alternative is to ignore the evidence. If Tamberlaine can be a king - then what do "King" and "majesty" mean?

To Tamberlaine of course, they have entirely different meanings than they do to the Eastern rulers. They refer to the inner qualities of the man himself. Being "naturally" a man of majesty, valiance, intelligence and nobility, Tamberlaine is innately "meant" to have the crown. He "deserves" it. The crown is not the source of his worth but the final recognition of his innate qualities. The crown, in the end, is the symbol of Tamberlaine!

Though Bajazeth is imprisoned and humiliated, the reality of the situation never totally dawns on him:

... my crown, my honour and my name
Thrust under yoke and thralldom of a thief ...²⁰

His mind simply cannot contain his experience. It is especially

19. Part I, Act IV, scene 3, lines 18-22, p156

20. Part I, Act V, scene 2, lines 197-198, p170

fitting, in this sense, that he batters his brains out on the cage.

Even at the end of Part II, the reality of Tamberlaine, the MEANING, has not entirely sunk in. The Governor of Babylon expects "Nature", the flooding river, to protect his city. In the harangue before the battle where Tamberlaine faces Callapine as he did his father in Part I, his opponents use the same terms, attempting to invalidate him:

ORCANES: But, shepherds issue, base-born Tamberlaine,
Think of thy end. This sword shall lance thy throat.²¹

CALLAPINE: Rail not, proud Scythian. I shall now revenge
My father's vile abuses and mine own.²²

But Tamberlaine, now, no longer needs to reinterpret their language. He has now transformed their symbols and made them his own. Tamberlaine's answer incorporates the gods, fate and fortune. He has earned their support for his inherent worth, his victories speak of his value:

... the shepherds issue, at whose birth
Heaven did afford a gracious aspect ...
And never meant to make a conqueror
So famous as is mighty Tamberlaine.²³

"Shepherd's issue" is no longer an insult, but added proof of his remarkable uniqueness. His success and fame speak for him and attribute to him all the values and virtues that these, his enemies, feel are owing to themselves. Those that do not recognize this are consumed by it. Callapine, before the battle, still harps on the "natural" scheme of things in which evil is defined as action against the good of the whole, and evil, being aberrant to the system, is

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21. Part II, Act III, scene 5, lines 76-77, p233
22. Part II, Act III, scene 5, lines 90-91, p223
23. Part II, Act III, scene 5, lines 79-84, p223

automatically punished.

... the force of Tamberlaine is great,
His fortune greater, and the victories
Wherein he hath so sure dismayed the world
Are greatest to discourage all our drifts;
Yet when the pride of Cynthia is at full,
She wanes again; and so shall his, I hope;
... This is the time that must eternise me
For conquering the tyrant of the world.²⁴

Fortune and time MUST side with the "natural" order. Tamberlaine is an aberration that will be felled by the weight of authority. No wonder Callapine runs at the sight of him!

In a way, Tamberlaine's opponents are in the same position as Faustus. They cannot enter into battle in an effective way because they cannot understand the perilousness of their situation. The way they see the world and themselves in it prevents them from giving their situation gravity, and the way they speak of it prevents them from seeing it in any other way.

TAMBERLAINE: THE WORLD EXPRESSES SELF

Since he has no validity whatsoever in the prevailing version of reality, Tamberlaine must evolve a cosmology in which his existence and his actions will have value, import and meaningful effect. Tamberlaine, the individual, thus becomes the centre of existence. The standard of values rests in his own perception of the world and his own innate characteristics. By extension, reality is now defined by personal experience: the individual becomes the model and gives meaning to the world around him; the world exists to give meaning to the worth of the individual. Role and meaning are no

24. Part II, Act V, scene 2, lines 42-55, p249

longer automatically ascribed, but earned.

Thus, language and symbols change their reference and meaning. The crown, for example, which formerly in itself had inherent, shared meaning and invested its wearer with power so the two became interchangeable, and spoke ultimately of the integrity of the whole, now becomes symbolic of the inner worth of the wearer. All actions and values speak of the person who makes them. Meaning and value are not taken for granted but achieved. The over-riding intention is to make the outside world speak of the individual and his inner worth.

Tamberlaine to the others is, at best, a nonentity, at worst, an apparition of evil. To himself, however, he is the very image of power, nobility, honour and strength. Since he is inconsequential to the world around him, he must make his vision manifest by changing the structure of the world around him and the way it speaks of itself so that it can acknowledge and speak of him as he deserves.

TAM: I am a lord ... and yet a shepherd by my parentage.

This is so obviously a contradiction in G/G terms that it is not even speakable without changing the underlying values given to the terms used.

"so my deeds shall prove"

By proving "worth" by "deeds", Tamberlaine changes the very basis on which the relationship between individual and society is defined and spoken. He conquers Asia, takes off his "weeds", and dons the armour and axe which best express his inner self.

Perhaps this is most simply illustrated in Tamberlaine's courtship of Zenocrate. Zenocrate first finds Tamberlaine and his actions absolutely repellent, and at the end of I-2 despairs, crying "wretched Zenocrate." However, she is "won by words" and "conquered by looks"; in other words, his innate, unique qualities and their

personal expression change her from his captive to his devoted lover. As she first judged the world, she found Tamberlaine beneath consideration and his actions confirmed her judgement. She would have agreed with Agydas:

Let not a man so vile and barbarous
... that keeps you from the honours of a queen
(being suppos'd his worthless concubine)
Be honoured with your love but for necessity!²⁵

But Zenocrate has seen Tamberlaine as he REALLY is:

Speak of Tamberlaine as he deserves ...
The entertainment we have had of him
Is far from villainy or servitude
And might in noble minds be counted princely ...²⁶

Now, rather than judge Tamberlaine by her former values where his very birth made him ignoble, she even suggests that others be judged in terms of how they see HIM: those who are noble will recognize the natural nobility in Tamberlaine. Little by little, he impresses himself, his values, his interpretation of reality and the symbols that speak it upon the world around him until, ultimately, he becomes the very standard by which all else is judged.

Tamberlaine's enemies blend together and become almost synonymous with one another. The idea of tradition, order, Kingship overtakes the individual who becomes the representative of that system of values: they are symbols of a way of seeing the world. Tamberlaine and his followers come to represent to them the epitome of the system's enemy, literally "out-laws": symbols of disorder, the antithesis, the destruction of the system. They never adjust their terms. They can only speak of him as being outside reality. In this sense, seen from the point of view of the Kings, Tamberlaine

25. Part I, Act III, scene 2, lines 26-30, p137

26. Part I, Act III, scene 2, lines 36-39, p137/8

BECOMES "Fate". There is no language with which to speak of him that accommodates his actions. Thus he becomes a force larger than themselves which overtakes them and everything they believe in.

GRID: VALUES AND DEFINITIONS

The established system, G/G, is already under some scrutiny when the play opens. Part I opens with a discussion about grid, or the relationship between position and worth, and Part II, with a discussion about group boundaries and responsibilities, thus indicating that the absolute unquestioning rightness of the system is already threatened from within. Other possibilities are becoming feasible.

Cosroe, brother to Mycetes, King of Persia, challenges the assumed fusion of actor and role. Is Mycetes entitled to the power and fealty his role as King demands because it is inherent in the role itself? Or should the Kingship go to the man with the "qualities" of a King? Should the power of the Kingship come from the crown or the man? By beginning the play with an elaboration on the relationship between actor and role, Marlowe is already making explicit the assumptions behind this value system; they are no longer taken for granted as being inherent.

Mycetes is not very bright and, worse, he is inept of speech. He is also, himself, confused as to the extent of his powers. Can he put Cosroe to death for belittling him? Where does the role end and the man begin? What does it mean to be Kingly? In a tightly functioning G/G system, Cosroe's suggestion that Mycetes is not King although he wears the crown would be traitorous since it cast aspersions on the implicit assumptions on which the entire

system is based. There is no separation between man and role. The man is defined by the role. Since the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, the parts are imbued with power and meaning from their relationship to the whole, and the man, as he takes on the role, becomes everything the role represents. As Cosroe tells Mycetes, but with irony: "you cannot choose (to do right) because it comes from you".

Cosroe has become aware of the value of personal qualities and, separating actor from role, of the discrepancy between his brother's weakness and his powerful role. He sees himself as the more inherently "Kingly" of the two: more forceful, wiser, and better at speaking. His "unhappy Persia" speech also separates kingship from the country it represents. By traditional thinking the king IS his country. There is no boundary between person, role and group. "Unhappy Persia ... not to be ruled by a man ..." Thus, Cosroe can no longer pay homage to the crown, but must seek for the man who can do credit to the symbol. Amazingly, that man turns out to be himself!

What is endearing about Cosroe is the way he reverts to tradition once he has obtained this goal. Of course, in his own eyes, once he is King, man and role are commensurate. The symbol becomes the man and, of course, vv. He certainly does not feel the same way about the interchangeability of role, or the value of personal worthiness when the positions are reversed and Tamberlaine, by the same criteria Cosroe used against Mycetes, proves the better man.

Cosroe brings tradition to bear to justify his hidden tyranny, uses history to justify the MAN. Thus he becomes trapped in his language and symbols and is unable to deal with the threat Tamberlaine poses.

Act I, scene 2: we meet Tamberlaine who has just acquired Zenocrate and her attendants in a raid. The pattern of action is set when Tamberlaine is told he has letters of safe conduct through Scythia and answers: "But now you see these letters and commands are countermanded by a greater man ..." If it is ability to speak that makes a king, why then, Tamberlaine is the most kingly. Tamberlaine has no difficulty expressing himself, and his words and "kingly presence" quickly win the loyalty of Tachelles and Osumcasane.

Contrary to expectations, this Scythian bandit is not overwhelmed, either, by the sight of gold. Throughout the play it is taken for granted that Tamberlaine, not being born into nobility, will do anything for gold. The value of gold is a constant theme in the play setting a "standard" for the transformation of values as they occur.

When Agydas offers Tamberlaine gold for Zenocrate, Tamberlaine is amazed:

Think you I weigh this treasure more than you?
Not all the gold in India's wealthy arms
Shall buy the meanest soldier in my train ...
Thy person is more worth to Tamberlaine
Than the possession of the Persian crown,
Which gracious stars have promis'd at my birth. 27

To Tamberlaine, no amount of money can buy a human life. Each person is either innately invaluable or valueless. There is no relationship between life and finance. This, in itself, is a powerful change in values, for his opponents continually attempt to bargain money for life, talk of ransom, calculating lives in gold. Tamberlaine knows this, for when they go to meet the Persians, having confirmed that the army approaching is richly apparelled, he says.

27. Part I, Act I, scene 2, lines 84-92, p113

Open the mails, yet guard the treasure sure.

Lay out our golden wedges to the view,
That their reflection may amaze the Persians.
And look we friendly on them when they come.²⁸

He knows they equate gold with value on other planes. He means to meet them on equal terms though they outnumber him. Theridamas, refugee from the opposition, is suitably impressed:

A Scythian shepherd so embellished
With nature's pride and richest furniture;²⁹

Like Zencrate, he is "won with words and conquered with thy looks,

I yield myself, my men and horse to thee
To be partaker of thy good or ill
As long as life maintains Theridamas.³⁰

True to the personalized vision, in Tamberlaine's world rank, respect and loyalty must be earned. Ideally, everything is valued for "what it is", not for what it represents, for ideally what it represents is its own inner worth.

TAMB: These are my friends, in whom I more rejoice
Than doth the King of Persia in his crown.³¹

Already, Tamberlaine has affected the balance of the world around him. Three loyal and powerful followers have left the Eastern Kings and joined, "willingly", with him. Followers must follow out of choice, not compulsion or custom. Where Mycetes has to ASK how far custom goes, Tamberlaine assumes that boundaries will be made by worth and inner need.

Tamberlaine, in fact, never changes. He gradually grows

28. Part I, Act I, scene 2, lines 138-141, p115

29. Part I, Act I, scene 2, lines 155-156, p118

30. Part I, Act I, scene 2, lines 228-231, p118

31. Part I, Act I, scene 2, lines 241-242, p118

into the man he always was, assessing symbols that make the inner man manifest. His importance is that he changes those around him. Not only the people, but role and boundaries as well. The entire context in which they are seen, their value and the language and symbols which speak of them are transformed by Tamberlaine's contact with them.

Marlowe's complex irony dealing with the value of gold, and by extension the question of values, is nicely illustrated in the following speech:

MEANDER: Then, noble soldiers, to entrap these thieves
 That live confounded in disorder'd troops
 If wealth or riches may prevail with them ...
 ... while base-born Tartars take it up,
 You, fighting for more honour than for gold,
 Shall massacre those greedy-minded slaves ...
 And, when their scattered army is subdued
 And you march on their slaughtered carcasses,
 Share equally the gold that bought their lives³²

The richness of the assumptions underlying this speech and their inherent contradictions speak not only of Marlowe's gift with words and astute insight into complexities of the workings of men, but also of his much maligned sense of humour, ironic though it may be. Assuming Tamberlaine and his men to be insignificant and gross barbarians without manner or moral, Meander also assumed that they will be so consumed by greed that the sight of great riches will overwhelm them. Drunk with greed, they will lose all control so that the "noble" soldiers (not greedy) can ambush and slaughter them and then take the money for themselves, for it is with that self-same gold that Meander is buying the soldiers. So "honour", as it is used here, despite its intended inference, really only means a modicum of self-control. Meander is assuming that his soldiers are also

32. Part I, Act II, scene 2, lines 59-70, p123

overcome by the promise of gold and so will do what he bids in promise of it. All they have to do is hold off long enough to kill Tamberlaine's men:

In contrast, of course, we also know that gold is not Tamberlaine's desire, nor that of his followers. The obsession with gold and the need to camouflage its significance in tales of Honour and Nobility rests entirely with the hierarchical society. To Tamberlaine, individual worth is everything. Thus, in Part II, when the Governor of Babylon attempts to buy his life with gold, Tamberlaine, without turning a hair, has him executed. No amount of gold is enough to buy a valuable life: any amount, too little for one that has no value. The valuing rests with Tamberlaine. Their inaccurate assumptions about Tamberlaine's greed for wealth combined with his practical attitude towards it sets in relief the underlying values that the Kings give to gold and wealth and human life.

The Kings are the symbols of their society. Like chessmen, both kings and followers assume that everyone is dispensable except the king and that those below him will devote themselves to his safety. Cosroe feels entirely justified in using Tamberlaine to obtain his crown. In fact, he feels that his wit in recognising Tamberlaine's qualities is extra confirmation of his entitlement to the throne. However, although he has all the correct information, he miscalculates:

Nature doth strive with Fortune and his (Tamb) stars
To make him famous in accomplished worth;
And well his merits show him to be made
His fortune's master and the king of man ...
In fair Persia noble Tamberlaine
Shall be my regent ... 33

33. Part I, Act I, scene 1, lines 33-49, pl20

Tamberlaine might be more worthy, but he is less entitled. To Tamberlaine, however, worth is entitlement. It is Cosroe who "teaches us all to have aspiring minds". Seeing himself in the same relationship to Cosroe as Cosroe to Mycetes, Tamberlaine formulates his basic law "if you can earn it, you can have it." Once Cosroe becomes king, he again sees Tamberlaine as "devilish shepherd", but for Tamberlaine "nobility" is no longer a social characteristic, but a personal quality which the crown can only confirm.

TECH: Our utmost service to the fair Cosroe
COSROE: Which I esteem as portion of my crown. ³⁴

Relying on traditional relationships, Cosroe takes it for granted, but Tamberlaine takes nothing for granted, not loyalty nor service. He expects of himself what he expects of his men, and to the day of his death fights for his power himself. He never reaps the rewards of others' deeds, nor feels it justified to do so. His motto remains: "Myself will bide the danger of the brunt."

Tamberlaine's concept of natural worth also extends beyond himself to others. His followers follow him "willingly", not by force or tradition, and he takes pride in this. He confirms that their natural virtue will bring them natural reward:

Your births shall be no blemish to your fame
For virtue is the fount whence honour springs,
And they are worthy she investeth kings. ³⁵

The proof of worth is in the reward. By inference, those who lost their thrones to Tamberlaine were not intrinsically worthy. Success is the ultimate proof of worth and rightness of the act; the ultimate justification both of earth and heaven.

14. Part I, Act II, scene 3, lines 34-35, p125

35. Part I, Act IV, scene 4, lines 136-138, p161

LANGUAGE AND SYMBOL

"Tis a pretty toy," says Mycetes, "to be a poet". But whereas Mycetes' inability to express himself loses him his crown, Tamberlaine's talent not only for the "mighty line" but also for making his vision manifest by creating symbols through which his meaning is externalised and shared gives him the ultimate power to change the world around him. He is a true poet, changing the relationships between the components of reality and creating a language by which this new vision can be communicated.

We have already mentioned how the value of gold, and the meaning of the crown change their reference and significance in Tamberlaine's hands, as do many of the words like "worth" and "nobility" which are the kingpins of a value system. Agydas might be said to have been killed by his own concept of "honour". A new cosmology speaks of a new relationship between man and man, between man and the universe, and demands not only a language but also symbols that will show these relationships in action. To be entirely successful, Tamberlaine must remake the world in his own image in such a way that others will recognise its meaning and acknowledge its values. Instead of the man representing the world, a personalised system assumes that the world represents man.

The coloured tents, for example, are not merely a conceit, nor merely "signs" which can be read by a process of simple translation: chien-dog. They are metaphors that speak of relationships and work on several levels: Tamberlaine's state of mind, the relationship between Tamberlaine and his present opponents; the relationship between present and future. Amongst other things, they speak of the relationship between Tamberlaine's inner state and his intended

actions; between those actions and their consequences for the people he is speaking to; projected into the future, they speak ultimately of the future state of mind and emotions of his opponents. Thus, they speak of the relationship between Tamberlaine and his opponents on several levels through a passage of time beginning in the present and projecting into the future. They are a range of possibilities, since each infers the next.

White, for example, shows Tamberlaine at peace and speaks of a simple relationship between his foes and himself. Surrender (white flag) will leave them as they are, causing neither physical distress nor mental anguish. Tamberlaine will be undisturbed and, at the same time, triumphant - not to mention pure, having taken no aggressive action. However, the very presence of the white tents implies the onset of the red which expresses Tamberlaine's rage and their blood and tears. The red, in turn, infers the on-coming black, a cold and hardened, implacable Tamberlaine, and their utter despair and devastation.

When Tamberlaine comes to Damascus, although the meaning of the tents is known, the Governor will not read them. At the last moment, he sends the virgins to plead with Tamberlaine. To the Governor, the virgins are powerful traditional symbols of the purity of the people and supplication of the conqueror. However, as the Governor will not read Tamberlaine's symbols, so Tamberlaine does not read him. To Tamberlaine the virgins are not the embodiment of sacrifice and purity of heart but poor young girls undervalued by those that rule them and uselessly sent to the slaughter.

Virgins, in vain you labour to prevent
That which mine honour swears shall be perform'd ...

They (Damascus) have refus'd the offer of their lives.
And know my customs are as peremptory
As wrathful planets, death or destiny 36

This is more than a personal whim. This is "how the world works". To Tamberlaine these are not arbitrary rules, but the very symbol of the irascibility of life's elemental forces.

In Part II, in the parallel scene, the Governor of Babylon, pinning his hopes on the natural forces defending his "entitled" position, likewise refuses to "read" Tamberlaine's symbols. However, in the time that has elapsed, Tamberlaine's language has become common knowledge and gained validity. The people plead with the Governor to take heed of Tamberlaine's true statement of their relationship and prognosis for the future.

The progress of the play is not simply a succession of battles. Tamberlaine is creating a symbolic reality through which he can make the outside world commensurate with his inner self and through which he strives to give himself and his actions meaning. It is necessary to create a language and symbols which will convey this meaning to others. Ultimately, the purpose of this world will be to speak of him and his values.

At the death of Zenocrate, Tamberlaine proceeds to make the external world the living image of his inner state in the most direct and simple way. By burning down the town, he makes that town the manifestation of his rage and grief, a monument.

This cursed town will I consume with fire,
Because this place bereft me of my love
The houses, burnt, will look as if they mourn'd ... 37

36. Part I, Act V, scene 2, lines 43-44; 64-65, p165/6

37. Part II, Act II, scene 4, lines 127-139, p208

The external world takes its meanings from Tamberlaine and his inner state. His birthplace, Scythia, formerly so inconsequential that the Kings considered it virtually off the map, gains relevance through its association with Tamberlaine. He builds his palace there so it might speak simultaneously of his birth and his greatness. Although once too insignificant to notice, Tamberlaine himself gradually become subject and standard of his world. As he "puts Scythia on the map" so too, the map, itself, registers the immense changes that Tamberlaine has wrought on the world. The map is a picture of the world. Its boundaries speak of the definitions and names by which that world is known and spoken and through which it derives meanings. It speaks of the groups and the relationships between these groups. During his progress, Tamberlaine changes all these boundaries, their significance and the relationships between them. Thus, he alters the form and meaning of the world he inhabits.

Ultimately, Tamberlaine succeeds in becoming himself the standard by which all others and all else are judged. When Callapine goes to reward Almada for his loyalty with a kingship, and justifies his choice:

I think it requisite and honourable ... to make him King
That is a gentleman ... at least ...

Almada, who has himself denied Tamberlaine and turned against him by assisting Callapine's escape, replies:

That's no matter, sir, for being a king; for Tamberlaine
came up of nothing.³⁸

Entirely new patterns of behaviour, entirely new values have become the norm: no longer theory, but practice. The climax is in that

38. Part II, Act III, scene 1, lines 71-74, p210

magnificent slanging match before the battle when Callapine, as much to humiliate Tamberlaine as to reward Almada gives Almada the crown. But Almada turns to Tamberlaine and asks his permission! This, truly, is proof of Tamberlaine's power. He has become the standard by which worth and meaning are valued and defined.

As Death runs from Tamberlaine, so others group round him. At the end of Part I peace reigns. Tamberlaine crowns his followers, giving public and symbolic recognition of their inner qualities and worth. He marries Zenocrata. And, perhaps most important, the Soldan acknowledges him. Tamberlaine dons the robes of state, the shared symbol of worth and power, and takes his "rightful" place. His inner worth and its external manifestation, inside and outside, are now entirely commensurate and publicly recognised. Thus, Tamberlaine the Great buries his dead with honour, makes laws, gets married: in other words, establishes a new order.

So Part I ends at a moment when everything appears to have been achieved and peace reigns. But intimations of things to come are also present. When Zenocrata finds the Emperor and Empress dead and sings her great ode to Fortune ("Behold the Turk and his great Empress ... Ah, Tamberlaine") she gives form and therefore meaning to the preceding events, and the formalism of the verse, the repetition of the refrain, projects them beyond their immediate context and into their ultimate manifestation in Part II.

Tamberlaine is the ultimate in self-made men. He has transformed the world in his own image to such a degree that the world has become a statement about himself. Nothing can touch him. Only one weakness, inherent in his very existence, threatens. His own humanity. His sons and his own mortality bring him to that final realisation where performance is seen in the light of competence, where the

tragic pattern becomes complete.

PART II - GROUP AND BOUNDARIES

Part I begins with a discussion about grid, the values inherent in rank and position and their relationship to the whole. Part II opens with an elaboration on group, its definition, its obligations and its boundaries. In the Prologue, Marlowe emphasises the limits of Tamberlaine's expansion: Fate and Death. And the characters, too, are fully occupied in readjusting and setting the boundaries of their world in both physical and symbolic terms.

As result of Tamberlaine's success, the Turks, bound together not only by their physical boundaries but also by their worship of Mohammed, find it necessary, although not pleasant, to bind together with their enemies, the Christians, in order to face the even more serious threat of Tamberlaine. Thus, traditional boundaries and definitions have become relative.

Group is defined by boundaries. The "other" always represents the limit of the group and helps to define it. To change the relationship to the "other" obviously implies a change in the composition, characteristics and therefore definition of the group. A clear definition of the "other" is one of the most potent ways of defining the group. Until this time, the identity of the Turks rested heavily on two factors: their God and their enemy. Their enemy was their enemy because of their worship of a different god. Thus the animosity was justified both by tradition and "Natural Law". Even a consideration of a change in this relationship and the self-definition of the group is an indication of the huge changes in classification and definition that result from Tamberlaine's success. Not only has Tamberlaine become a viable, recognised enemy, but

the Turks now begin to think of themselves primarily not as followers of Mohammed but as enemies of Tamberlaine!

The group, by definition, requires certain commitments and rituals of confirmation. Membership in the group demands shared values and modes of behaviour. "Barbarian" and "Philistine" essentially refer to outsiders, someone whose behaviour and values are unacceptable and/or who does not acknowledge "real" values - one's own!

The threat Tamberlaine now poses is so great that Orcanes finds it necessary to adjust his boundaries and include within his meaningful whole his former enemies. Although Tamberlaine would not agree with his analysis: "Not he, but Fortune hath made him great", he would certainly agree with Orcanes' elaboration of the problem: "He brings a WORLD of people to the field." This is exactly the case: one world against another, and Orcanes rightly concludes that those who are not with Tamberlaine must make a "world" against him.

However, to adjust time-honoured definitions piece-meal is a difficult task, and inklings of failure appear when even Orcanes cannot resist flexing his muscles in the face of his former enemy ("Do you forget who I am", etc) inferring continually how relieved Sigismund must be to have him as an ally.

The whole attempt breaks down when Sigismund is unable to see himself with any lasting validity outside of his time-honoured boundaries. He cannot retain the sense of himself outside his role as leader of the Christians. He is a Christian King. As Christian King, he is enemy of the Turks. As enemies, they cannot be trusted and by definition, his honour and his value rest in fighting against them. The game, rather than choose-your-friends, is define-your-enemy: Tamberlaine or the Turks. Tamberlaine as enemy requires a

complete readjustment of the terms of self-definition. However, for Sigismund, the immediate situation calls into focus all of the symbols that represent and define him in the traditional terms: the blasphemy of Mohammad, the avenger of Christian wrongs, the representative of Christ.

True, he has made an oath. But to whom has he made it? Marlowe carefully elaborates the obligations of the oath. Is it a personal oath, as it might be to Tamberlaine? In that case, whomever it was made to, it is the man carrying out his own word that gives it meaning. Or is it an oath made to an "other" - an "other" whose validity gives value to the oath? By inference, this must be someone included in a recognised group to which one is connected. Marlowe also suggests a third alternative - the interpretation Orcanes gives it - that it is, above all, an oath made to God and therefore, regardless of the recipient, binding. Implied here, of course, are certain assumptions about one's relationship to the god, for it is Sigismund's assumptions about his duty to his god that allow him to break the oath whereas Orcanes's relationship to Mohammad would prevent him from doing so. Within this question is the basic definition lying behind every set of values for interpreting the world: how does one define a man? If the oath holds, then the group and its boundaries have been redefined. The man then sees himself in a different context and a different relationship to others, to himself, and to his own actions.

But the oath does not hold. It is an oath made not to a man, but to a Turk; not to God, but to an enemy. Sigismund, misreading the signs of the changing times, becomes extinct. The old definitions in the new context are futile and meaningless. He dies defending a set of definitions that no longer have validity.

Tamberlaine has replaced tradition as the standard by which all else is measured. Sigismund's world, bounded by time-honoured boundaries, is no longer valid; the relationship between man and God, changed and redefined. In grief at Sigismund's treatment of his god, and in admiration for Christ's honesty in allowing Sigismund to lose because of his treachery, Orcanes acknowledge's Christ's power by becoming a disciple of Christ, thereby redefining his group: Turk no longer MEANS a follower of Mohammad.

Callapine, "born monarch of the western world/ yet here detain'd by Tamberlaine", offers Almeda both wealth and rank, assuming his right, by inheritance of the God-given order, to dole out such privileges. He weaves a fantastically seductive story of splendorous dreams which captivates Almeda who then helps Callapine become free from Tamberlaine. But Callapine is, in fact, never free from Tamberlaine. Tamberlaine has become the whole world. When Callapine crowns Almeda, it is with Tamberlaine's permission. When Tamberlaine, on the verge of death, appears outside his tents, Callapine and his army flee in terror. Both the presence and image of Tamberlaine pervade the entire known world and hover over uncharted climes. There is nowhere where there is no Tamberlaine. Tamberlaine has become the world and there are only two groups: those with him and those against.

Scene 2, Act I, and scenes I and 3 in Act II all end with grouping together and confirming the group in "carousing", placing a special emphasis on group solidity and validation of self through membership in the group. They also emphasize, or course, the separation of a once united world - united in, if nothing else, recognition of definitions and boundaries - into two mutually exclusive camps,

for it is not only the specific make-up of a group that underlies its identity, but its boundaries and limitations. Thus in a society where the group takes second place to the individual, or where the individual is the focus and reason d'être of the group, the limitations inherent in the individual provide the limits of the group and define the weaknesses inherent in the system.

In traditional terms, Tamberlaine is both unstoppable and invulnerable. By Part II he has readjusted the definitions underlying the way man speaks of the universe and his relationship to it and has changed the boundaries and meaning of the physical world as it was known. The map, the picture of the world, which takes on increasing importance, has been changed out of all recognition. Far from being wiped off the map, Tamberlaine has changed the map itself. The map now speaks of Tamberlaine.

As a result of Tamberlaine's actions, the relationship of man to the metaphysical has also changed. Turks, for example, become Christians. Through Tamberlaine the entire concept of God also comes under discussion. When he starts out, Tamberlaine defines himself as the representative of the gods. He is a messenger doing the WILL of Fortune and the gods. Little by little, his world becomes so personalized that instead of being a part of the natural order, the order itself becomes incarnate in him. Thus his relationship with the gods changes from messenger to partnership and from partnership to embodiment,

In vain, I see, men worship, Mahomet.
My sword hath sent millions of Turks to hell,
Slew all his priests, his kinsmen, and his friends,
And yet I live untouch'd by Mahomet.
There is a God, full of revenging wrath,
From whom the thunder and the lightning breaks,

Whose scourge I am, and him I will obey.³⁹

With the attempted union between Orcanes and Sigismund, the identity of God and the definition of his relationship to man comes into question. Once it becomes a matter of choice, its absolute certainty is broken. Many of those Turks Tamberlaine slew had become Christians. So have all external gods become one, in opposition to the god of Tamberlaine.

Seek out another godhead to adore;
The God that sits in heaven, if any god.
For he is God alone, and none but he.⁴⁰

But who is this god that sits in heaven and whose scourge is Tamberlaine? He is Tamberlaine's own god. Tamberlaine lives "untouched by Moham" and, by inference, Christ, although he burned the sacred books. Yet there is a god, a god who speaks to Tamberlaine alone. A personal, inner god confirms the rightness of Tamberlaine, from the position of favourite of an external, impersonal god, to his personal messenger, Tamberlaine has become the embodiment of an internalised deity, the inevitable concept of metaphysical morality inherent in a personalised view of the universe.

True, having burned the books and declared his god, Tamberlaine is struck down with an inexplicable illness. But there is no suggestion that an all-powerful deity has struck. What is explicit is that even though the god may reside in Tamberlaine, Tamberlaine is NOT the god incarnate. He is mortal, prone to weakness of the body and its ultimate limitation - Death. In fact, it is inevitable. Tamberlaine, the man, has begun to approach his limit.

Fate and the conditions of mortality confront and confound

39. Part II, Act V, scene 1, lines 177-184, p246

40. Part II, Act V, scene 1, lines 198-200, p247

Tamberlaine throughout Part II. First is the death of Zenocrate. His song, "to elevate the fair Zenocrate" elevates his love and her importance to him, the extension of his existence in her. Zenocrate in the face of Death is admirably stoic: "when this transitory flesh Hath ... (waned) with enforced and necessary change ..." But for Tamberlaine, nothing he has not willed has ever been either forced or necessary. For the first time, Tamberlaine has met an opponent stronger than himself. "Fate" becomes a two-pronged fork working both for him as he overcomes his human foes and against him as it whisks from him the gentler, poetic side of himself and then presents him with his unpalatable sons.

Tamberlaine leaves the landscape a living monument to his grief, anger and rage. But he cannot still his great opponents, Destiny and Death. Or are they one and the same? The ultimate destiny of man, however great, is Death. So, as Tamberlaine's power increases both as conqueror of men and conqueror of meaning, the breath of Destiny blows closer to his back.

Besides Death, what can represent the ironies and trickeries of Fate more potently than one's children? Despite psychological and environmental theory, it is and has ever been that many a swan has been born of a duck and many a duckling of a swan. So is the mighty Tamberlaine confounded by his own issue.

Here, Tamberlaine himself becomes blinded by the classifications and values he places on the world. One of the weaknesses of the personalised system is, obviously, that within the moral context of the greatest good being to follow one's inner being to the point where it is outwardly manifest, all inner needs and views will not be the same. A truly personalised order will consist of a myriad of worlds and ultimate values each contained in a separate body. There

is, despite agreement that the individual is the centre of the universe, still a choice of values on which to base the judgement of worth: money, beauty, intelligence, might, etc. One of the great problems in the personalised system as a whole is the extreme difficulty in giving full weight to the worth of someone else who is using values which contradict one's own. One common solution is the split into two cosmologies: a personalised low group/grid system for the leaders who chart the universe in terms of their private vision and a low group/high grid for the majority where they are tied by their relationship to the leader and their place within his system. Through Tamberlaine's sons, Marlowe begins to elaborate on the weaknesses of the personalised system personified by Tamberlaine.

Only Calyphas of the three sons is, in fact, worthy issue of Tamberlaine. He has a mind of his own and the courage of his convictions. Where the other two boys fear their father more than life itself and rush into battle to avoid the more terrifying fate of confronting him, Calyphas, while knowing the consequences, sticks to his mettle. He sees, as his father did, a pattern beyond himself, albeit a different one. He sees what Tamberlaine could never face, the one thing that takes Tamberlaine entirely by surprise: the ultimate destiny of man in the hands of Death. Having faced the reality of Death, Calyphas does not fear war. But, like his father, he will only fight for himself, alone at the head of the army. However, unlike Tamberlaine, he envisions the uselessness of worldly triumph in the face of Death. To Tamberlaine, this is a two-fold affront. Calyphas rejects everything that Tamberlaine holds to be of value. To Tamberlaine war is the testing ground of a man's worthiness: physical courage in the face of danger and undivided loyalty are the prime symptoms of worth. Thus Calyphas' true bravery is "effrontery" and

his courage, cowardice. (Note the reappearance of the Kings' language in Tamberlaine's mouth and his need, now that he has attained his goal, to reinforce the absoluteness of his own value system).

Secondly, Calyphas sees what Tamberlaine absolutely refuses to acknowledge until it is unavoidable. When he asks "what is a man?", his answer is simply: a mortal being. To Calyphas, life is pervaded by the fact of Death.

In very nearly the same words in which the Soldan spoke to him, Tamberlaine says of his son:

 this coward, villain, not my son,
 But traitor to my name and majesty.⁴¹

However, this son sees further than his father can, knows the limits of the human frame, cowers from no one - not even the mighty Tamberlaine - and wishing to be no man's minion will fight only for himself. Truly the son of Tamberlaine! But like the kings before him, Tamberlaine can admit no set of values other than his own. In cold blood, he kills his own son, cursing the gods for sending him such a son as he takes from them the power of life and death "to live up to his name ... the scourge of God."

The ultimate justification in the personalized view of the world is success. To succeed is to be right, and, given any sense of metaphysics, God is then on your side. So Tamberlaine has won. His one opponent who not only offered a different set of values but a set of values which pointed out the weaknesses in Tamberlaine's vision is destroyed, and so is the one fruit of his life who might have carried on his own vision and, more important, his name.

He is left with the other two sons, cowards in anyone's

41. Part II, Act IV, scene 1, lines 91-92, p229

terms, flatterers and yes men, anxious to live up to the good word of their great father, sensitive to ensconce themselves in the words and trappings that give them the appearance he admires, but lacking, ironically, both inner worth and conviction.

When Zenocrate dies, Death casts its shadow over the action becoming Tamberlaine's major antagonist. Olympia's untoward death adds to the sense of encroaching Death that pervades Part II, strengthening its power. Theridimas' thwarted attempt to turn her capture from an ending to a new beginning, as Tamberlaine did for Zenocrate, also stresses the personal uniqueness of Tamberlaine, reminding us that it is not behavioural form but the inner content of the man on which success depends. However, Tamberlaine's remarkably unique personal qualities are the heart not only of his success but of the failure of his ultimate vision.

Throughout Part II Tamberlaine strives to leave his mark, to make permanent. He burns the town to commemorate Zenocrate's death and leave a monument to his grief. He is roused to murder at the intransigence of his sons. His chariot, metaphor of his climb, representing the reversal of roles, accompanies him everywhere. He builds a palace in his native city to speak of his origins and fame. Tamberlaine struggles to make a tradition based on himself, to leave something permanent behind. In G/G, where, by shared consensus, it is the glory of the part to sustain the whole, it is assumed the traditions, monuments, culture of the whole will confirm its integrity long enough to be almost permanent. Tamberlaine's world, however, stems from and is entirely dependent upon, him, creator and standard by which all else is judged. In Part II, he strives to establish symbolic permanence.

To Tamberlaine, power begins to equal immortality. However,

with his ingestion of the spirit of God, Tamberlaine begins to weaken. No man has been able to fell him, but Death awaits him. Fittingly, though, Death will not take this powerful adversary by stealth, on the battlefield. This is to be a face-to-face conflict where no one can be deemed winner but Death itself. Thus, Death allows Tamberlaine to "conquer with looks", giving him the extra day the doctors say might be his salvation and then killing him on its own terms, one to one, with no mitigating circumstances. Tamberlaine dies of what he is - human, and therefore mortal. Tamberlaine has overcome all material obstacles, changed both the physical and symbolic universe, and redefined the place of man in the cosmos. However, he is mortal and thus must die.

What daring god torments my body thus,
And seeks to conquer mighty Tamberlaine?
... let us march against the power of heaven ...
To signify the slaughter of the gods,
That thus envy the health of Tamberlaine. 42

The gods, now, are the only opponents fit for Tamberlaine. In a sense, he has already won against them, too, changing their shape and meaning in relationship to their followers. But the god as Destiny - (As Faustus later says, The Destiny of man is death) - he cannot escape. The greatest of men - but still Man.

In spite of death I will go show my face

Once back from terrifying Callapine and his army, Tamberlaine faces his last battle with a growing sense of recognition of its meaning in his own terms. In a world where the uniqueness of the individual is primary, the death of that individual is the death of that world.

Tamberlaine reads the map, the symbolic record of both space

42. Part II, Act V, scene 3, lines 42-53, p251

and time. Past, present and future become one. The earliest days towards Persia "To Asia where I stay against my will". and the future "Look here, my boys: see what a world of ground lies westward ... And shall I die, and this unconquered?" all becomes encapsulated in the moment.

And shall I die, and this unconquered?
Lo, here, my sons, are all the golden mines,
Inestimable drugs and precious stones ...
As much more land, which never was described ...
And shall I die, and this unconquered?⁴³

The simple longing with which Tamberlaine describes the unconquered regions coupled with his pathetic appeals to his sons and his desperate refrain "And shall I die and this unconquered" make manifest the infinite possibilities laid waste by his impending death. A wealth of "might have beens" made even more powerful by what has gone before, and not much mitigated by.

Here, lovely boys; what death forbids my life,
That lets your lives command in spite of death.

But just to rub it in, the sons respond:

AMYRAS: Alas, my lord, how should our bleeding hearts,
Wounded and broken with your highness' grief
Retain a thought of joy or spark of life?
Your soul gives essence to our wretched subjects,
Whose matter is incorporate in your flesh.

CELEBINAS: Your pains do pierce our soul; no hope survives
For by your life we entertain our lives.⁴⁴

This is the truth of it. All persons, objects and symbols now derive their meanings from Tamberlaine. With his death comes the death of meaning.

Tamberlaine assures them that he will breath his fiery

43. Part II, Act V, scene 3, lines 152-159, p254

44. Part II, Act V, scene 3, lines 160-161, 162-166, 168-169, p254

spirit "by equal portions into both your breasts"

My flesh, divided in your precious shapes,
Shall still retain my spirit, though I die,
And live in all your seeds immortally⁴⁵

and crowns Amyras, but Amyras' very reluctance to don the robe and sceptre and mount the throne is proof enough that though he may be blood of Tamberlaine he hasn't his spirit. Tamberlaine even has to tell him to "sit up".

The map is the image of his life made comprehensible, its meaning made manifest. In the light of what has been done, captured in the image the map reflects, lies the reality of what is undone. The sight of his son on the throne confirms, even to Tamberlaine, the finality of the end. Nothing will remain. His deeds and his empire will die with him. Even his god will die, for no one else can call on Tamberlaine's private god. No one will remain to tell his story.

His ground will be transformed by others. Nothing but the history of his name and deeds will remain. Even as he hands the job yet to be finished to his sons, he finds them impossibly wanting. He places his might, his power, his world and his dreams in their hands, knowing it will sift through their fingers like sand.

Be warn'd by him, then; learn with awful eye
To sway a throne as dangerous as his;
For, if thy body thrive not full of thoughts
As pure and fiery as Phyteus' beams,
The nature of these proud rebelling jades
Will take occasion by the slenderest hair,
And draw thee piecemeal ...
Through rocks more steep and sharp than Caspian cliffs.
The nature of thy chariot will not bear
A guide of baser temper than myself ...
Farewell, my boys! ...
For Tamberlaine, the scourge of God, must die.⁴⁶

45. Part II, Act V, scene 3, lines 173-175, p255

46. Part II, Act V, scene 3, lines 235-249, p257

And with him all that he has been and done and made. These boys will never "hold the fiery spirit."

As Tamberlaine hands everything he is and has over to his sons, he sees with certainty their inability to take his place; as he encourages their succession, he emphasizes his own uniqueness. Rights of inheritance are not enough. The qualities necessary to keep his empire and conquer both the material world and the world of meaning are unique to him. He cannot be replaced.

AMYRAS: Let earth and heave his timeless death deplore,
For both their worths will equal him no more.⁴⁷

The meaning of their world was formed and carved by the mind, feelings, actions and vision of one man. His spoils ultimately were his right to transform the lives of men, their boundaries, their rules, their values and even their gods into the form which was meaningful to him and ultimately spoke of his right, his inner worth and his uniqueness. So reality took on his shape and he gave it meaning. But being unique, when he dies, that shape and meaning die with him. A world shaped by a single soul is bounded by that soul, although it appears boundless.

To change the shape of the world, transform the social structure and create the values and language by which men speak of themselves and give meaning to their experience makes a man into a god. If he succeeds, there is nothing in the known world he cannot do. Validation rests in his success. Successful, he is all-powerful. But despite appearances, there are boundaries, however invisible. He is still a man. Though he may succeed beyond all mortal imaginings, even change the entire world, in the end he will,

47. Part II, Act V, scene 3, lines 253-254, p257

must, die. This world is unique unto him as he is unique among men and it is dependent upon him. When the greater pattern finally is revealed, Tamberlaine, still but a man, meets his ultimate Destiny. As he breaths his last, this world he has created and all its meaning, crumbles with him.

MACBETH: G/G AS A CRITICAL TOOL

Macbeth¹ is probably the most obvious of Shakespeare's Tragedies to illustrate Dr Douglas' model. Because the play is also so familiar and has amassed such a weighty critical history, it also seems a feasible choice for demonstrating the capacity of the model to explore specific interpretive issues. For the sake of elaboration, I have chosen to look at the place of Lady Macbeth in the play.

Common consensus casts Lady Macbeth as the villain, the serpent in Macbeth's Eden. However, there are clear indications that this is not the play's intent, not the least of which is Shakespeare's emphasis on Macbeth conceiving the murder before she even comes on the scene. Instead of using a personal reading to examine whether she is "evil incarnate" and Macbeth an innocent corrupted by his wife (all terms pregnant with preconceived moral implications) one might approach the play through G/G and assess what Lady Macbeth's function might be within the process of the action.

Structurally, Macbeth's story is the same as Faustus', a man who sees a chink in the wall of reality, catches a glimpse of another way of defining his relationship to the world, and is thwarted by his inability to find the terms to express and justify this new-found vision. The acknowledgement of personal ambition implies a world view centred on the needs and desires of the individual. However, like Faustus, Macbeth has only the language, values and symbols of a construct that values the individual only in relationship to his part in the larger, signifying whole. Hence, as Faustus "damns" himself, Macbeth judges even his thoughts "monstrous". The salient difference

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1. Textual quotations: Shakespeare, William, Macbeth. The Alexander Text of William Shakespeare. The Complete Works. Ed. Peter Alexander, Collins, London & Glasgow, 1979.

between them is that Faustus, as the Chorus suggests, disorders only himself while Macbeth is in a position to affect an entire society, and does.

From the start, there is an emphasis on anomaly ("Fair is foul and foul is fair"; "so fair and foul a day ..."; "nothing is but what is not") which suggests a focus on definition and signifying ordering. The classification, definition and evaluation of anomalies calls forth the underlying precepts on which meaning and morality are based. This threatening ambiguity runs throughout the play, necessitating an overt confrontation with underlying precepts. The stress on anomaly exposes the implicit staples of the cosmological order forcing an explicit consideration of the fundamental ontological core: "what is a man?" is a constant refrain.

There is also a centring on the question of what is "natural": the definition of "natural" is blatantly socially determined, an explicit expression of the way society orders reality, attributes values and places itself and its members in the cosmos. "Natural" is that which is in accordance with the order of the cosmology. To define oneself as "unnatural" implies one has judged oneself in terms of a value system by which one cannot be acknowledged.

At first, Macbeth comes to terms with his startling discovery of a separate, wilful self by deciding to leave things to the "natural order": "If chance will have me King, why, chance may crown me, without my stir." However, when Duncan names Malcolm heir, the "natural order" appears somewhat recalcitrant, and Macbeth feels the need to take "fate" into his own hands.

That is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'er leap

For in my way it lies²

Macbeth's world is an unusually tight-knit G/G society with few places for recognition or advancement. The few rewards available, even when "earned" are distributed through Duncan's personal largesse. For example, although Banquo and Macbeth are equally entitled to recognition, Duncan merely apologises to Banquo for the paucity of titles and gives him heartfelt thanks. Duncan, "father" of this tight extended family, personally hands out prizes and takes the ultimate credit for himself.

Duncan: I have begun to plant thee and will labour
To make thee full of growing

Banquo: If there I grow
The harvest is your own³

Everything goes into the family pot. There is no room for personal ambition or individual advancement, not even any acknowledgement that they could even exist! Hence, any attempt at self-development would inevitably be excessive and place one outside the existing structure: witness the Thane of Cawdor whose intent, as well as title, Macbeth inherits.

With the single exception of the Thane of Cawdor, this society seems to have no history of rebellious behaviour. Duncan's judgement on the troublesome Thane patronisingly isolates personal loyalty as a primary value:

No more that Thane of Cawdor shall receive
Our bosom interest.⁴

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2. Act 1, scene 4, lines 48-50, p1003
3. Act 1, scene 4, lines 28; 33, p1002
4. Act 1, scene 2, lin 65, p1000

Duncan proves an abysmally poor judge of character, but it is not entirely his fault. The structure depends on the assumption of absolute trust; trust is the glue that binds the parts together. It is taken for granted that a man will behave in consonance with his heart which is assumed to be reflected in his social position. Consequently, the society is incapable of dealing with threats from within. This also casts some light on why Macduff, despite his conscious awareness of Macbeth's tyranny, leaves his family alone in Scotland.

The disease, the disorder with which Macbeth afflicts this country is distrust. Distrust eventually gives rise to the disruption of even natural physical functions: no one sleeps (the action takes place at night and everyone from King to Porter is awake; even the dead walk) nor eats.

The discussion of evaluating premises begins when Banquo and Macbeth, two halves of the perfect whole, present opposing responses to the Weird Sisters. Banquo easily finds a "natural" explanation of their appearance. Suggesting they have "bubbled" out of their "natural" place, he sets them into a coherent, extended cosmic order. Macbeth, however, placing himself at the centre of significance sees them as portents directed toward himself. His soliloquy reveals the crisis he embodies between the G/G perspective and its Personalised opposite.

Two truths are told
As happy prologues to the imperial theme ...
This supernatural soliciting/ Cannot be ill;
Cannot be good. If ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success
Commencing in a truth? ...
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs

Against the use of nature?⁵

Beginning on the basis of personal success, he enlists his feelings and desires only to turn back to the socially shared judgement against the very concept. Although he entertains the possibility that judgement and interpretation might rest in perspective, he is unable to adjust his perspective to accommodate his desires, nor relinquish his desires in accordance with the accepted perspective. This dichotomy activates the play.

This struggle is perhaps even more clearly expressed in his soliloquy - "If t'were done when 'tis done ..." usually interpreted as Macbeth making up his mind whether to kill Duncan. However, careful reading reveals that his mind is already made up. His problem is finding justification for the act in the light of its inevitable enactment and prescribed punishment.

This even-handed justice
Commends th'ingredients of our poison'd chalice
To our own lips ...⁶

Macbeth sees the murder as "unnatural" and automatically prejudged and sentenced. The pattern and the punishment, prescribed and inevitable. He uses the terms of integration to condemn the act and himself. However, there is no hint that he might change his mind.

He's here in double trust
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject -
Strong both against the dead, then, as his host
Who should against his murderer shut the door
Not bear the knife myself⁷

He can't find fault with Duncan or justify himself. He even brings the entire cosmos - God and the Angels - to bear against himself, not

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5. Act I, scene 3, lines 128-136, p1002
6. Act I, scene 7, lines 1-28, p1005
7. ibid

only confirming the essential rightness of the cosmology but setting himself outside it. He cannot even credit his own motives.

I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'er leaps itself,
And falls on th'other⁸

But he will do it, thus, he is aligned with the underworld:

Nature seems dead and wicked dreams abuse
The curtain'd sleep⁹

Like a child with his hand in the cookie jar, Macbeth is looking for an escape from the inevitable punishment. Though intent on the deed, he condemns it. Though he fears the punishment, he accepts it as both inevitable and deserving. In his defence, he offers "only" "vaulting ambition", a socially unacceptable characteristic and a defence he cannot credit.

It is important to remember that this is not the only possible response. Even murder is subject to cultural interpretation and its judgement relative to context and cosmology. The fact of murder does not necessarily invite condemnation, nor does it automatically bring self-condemnation. (Richard III has no difficulty justifying himself, nor Claudius in ruling Denmark).

It is also well to remember that we ourselves live in a world where ambition is a much prized trait. In a society where the individual takes precedence over the group, the group regarded as a potential danger to the development of the person, it is valid justification to point to one's ambition, needs, expression. However, where the individual is the source rather than the reflection of morality, an extended context is assumed and a language available to

8. ibid

9. Act II, scene 1, lines 50-51, p1006

describe and justify self-promotion and celebrate ambition as enhancing to the place of the individual as the source of meaning.

Macbeth cannot find those terms. He is unable to take advantage of the position he gains or to take actions which might mitigate, if not justify, his behaviour, but must continually replay the original act becoming increasingly monstrous as if in confirmation of his original judgement.

To set Macbeth's perspective in relief, Shakespeare offers us a coherent alternative. Perhaps because she is a woman, Lady Macbeth is not immersed in the integrated value system that Macbeth and the other men inhabit. She sees the world in personalised terms: a man might have what he can take and be what he is uniquely meant to be has he the determination and courage. (Not an unfamiliar outlook!) Macbeth's letter activates her world view. The attainment of personal ambition, the quest for the expression of personal superiority becomes viable and, in her eyes, justifiable.

Her major complaint against Macbeth is that he wants to have it both ways. She suspects him of being a hypocrite.

Thou wouldst be great
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness that should attend it.
... wouldst not play false,¹⁰
And yet wouldst wrongly win.¹⁰

And, in a sense, she is right. For herself, she feels her "feminine" traits, her feelings, will interfere with her determination. Both know enough about how society works to know that the eye should not see what the hand does. However, their perspectives on the dead are immutably opposed.

The long discussion between Macbeth and his Lady before the

10. Act I, scene 3, lines 15-19, p1003

murder is an overt confrontation between two opposing cosmologies. Macbeth, newly "clothed" in admiration from the group yet yearning to leap into the kingship is understandably frightened to leave the comfort of acceptance and embark on an act which, through his own condemnation, will isolate him.

He hath honoured me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinion from all sorts of people
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.¹¹

On the surface of it, this seems valid justification in terms of the social context. Honour, position and the good will of others, "won" justly. "Fitting" like clothes tailored for him, and like the perfectly cut garment, showing him off to advantage. (The metaphor of clothing and "fit" runs through the play: "Last our old clothes sit easier than our new"; "Let us put on manly readiness", etc) However, Macbeth's references constantly refer uncomfortably back to the opinions of others. Second, the choice of words suggests a disturbing temporariness: "bought" .. "now .. so soon", giving some credence to Lady Macbeth's suggestion that these are empty excuses and not valid justifications.

Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dressed yourself ... Art thou afeared
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire?¹²

"Dressed yourself" suggests both that it is merely costume he is "wearing" and that he is being "fashioned" by others. Implying a clear-cut division between the opinions of others and his own, she admonishes him to take control of his own life. This is the unmistakable language of Personalisation. "Self realisation", "rising

11. Act I, scene 6, lines 32-35, p1005

12. Act I, scene 6, lines 35-36, p1005

to one's full potential", taking control of one's life, founded in the conviction that one's existential task is to strive to attain the actions and positions that best express one's inner being.

I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.¹³

Although the reference is assumed, the ambiguous bet-hedging of his answer condenses it into the fulcrum of the argument: what is a man? What is his duty? Banquo and Duncan might agree that a man's duty is to his society, but for Lady Macbeth, a man's duty is to himself.

What beast was it then
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man.¹⁴

No logic can breach the gap between the two perspectives. The context that gives rise to one is unthinkable in the other. Macbeth, however, is perilously balanced between the two. He has neither the desire to retreat into a comfortably functioning part of the encompassing whole nor the justifying context to embrace the pursuit of his own desires.

Lady Macbeth's argument is informed by the concept of unique essence: he will always be the man who wished to be king and thought to kill Duncan to gain the kingship. Indeed, Macbeth's self-condemnation at the very "thought" supports her theory.

"What if we should fail" whines Macbeth. "We fail! But screw your courage to the sticking place and we'll not fail." The point is to take your chances. Success is not an accidental smile of fortune but the result of human risk and endeavour. Value is earned.

13. Act I, scene 6, lines 41-42, p1005

14. Act I, scene 6, lines 42-44, p1005

Success proves worth. The daring individual projects significance and meaning outwards.

Macbeth's non-sequitor reply focuses again on ontological definitions:

Bring forth male children only
For thy undaunted mettle should compose nothing but males¹⁵

Even definitions of gender are ambiguous. Unable to credit a woman with courage, determination, or even original thought, Macbeth casts her as "mother" and projects her qualities on her unborn offspring. The ambivalence associates her with the witches, also women with male characteristics, and asks again "what is a man?"

The play is clearly not about whether murder is a good idea. Duncan is dead by Act II. The emphasis is on consequence and behaviour, both social and personal. The Macbeths come to the dead from different organising contexts. The terms by which they organise and make meaning of events makes up the action of the remainder of the play. Lady Macbeth's behaviour throws Macbeth's crisis into sharp focus.

For Lady Macbeth, the dead is no more than a means to an end. She shares the horror and responsibility of the murder and does everything possible to make their act a success. However, she is no match for Macbeth's self-condemnation. Instead of the prestige, admiration and intimacy she envisages, the murder brings fear, secrecy and separation.

Had Macbeth been inspired enough to integrate her perspective, they might have lived to enjoy both each other and their new positions, even ruled with some success. After all, success would

15. Act I, scene 6, lines 71-3, p.1005

change the context of the murder and provide it with justification. They might even have restructured the social ethos, centring it on themselves. As it is, Macbeth's firm hold on the context of Integration places himself and his Lady outside any corroboration, so the deed affords them no advantage.

The significance lies in the behaviour that results from their perspectives on their shared activity. Having had a genuine concept of success, Lady Macbeth can recognise failure.

Naught's had, all's spent
Where our desire is got without content
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy¹⁶
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy

She makes no mitigating excuses. She played and lost. Macbeth's self-exile from "normality" entails a withdrawal from human contact, so even her intimate relationship with him has dissolved. The Personalised ethos offers no elaborate inter-personal structure to support one in one's need. Success is the ultimate exoneration; failure, the ultimate loss. Isolated in her suffering, Lady Macbeth becomes cognisant of the suffering of others and the consequences of her deeds. Oppressed by this sudden vision of inter-connected lives whose suffering she suddenly shares, like many an individual who has lost justification through failure, she takes her own life. Her story marks a progress from self-willed personalisation to a recognition of interdependence.

In the meantime, of course, Macbeth has been killing! Lady Macbeth's opposing but consistent perspective sets Macbeth's behaviour and inner dichotomy into relief. Having both performed the deed and condemned it, Macbeth has left himself no space for man-

16. Act III, scene 2, lines 5-8, p1012

oeuvre. Nothing he does has its desired effect. He condemns himself to repeating the same act in the hope that the next murder will somehow supply justification for the first and last. ("Why this is Hell ...")

I am in blood
Steeped in so far, that, should I wade no more
Returning were as tedious as go o'er¹⁷

A poor excuse, at best! Having judged himself "monstrous" and "unnatural", he has placed himself outside justification. Ironically, he has also declared himself exceptional. Thus he becomes increasingly monstrous in desperate confirmation of his original judgement. In the "catalogue" Macbeth, like the murderers, "goes for man", but, caught in a nightmare of his own making, having defined himself outside both the benefits and constraints of justification, he obsessively repeats the act hoping that bulk will turn to weight, receding ever further from the possibility of either confirmation or atonement.

He compares his life with the "natural" order, the monstrous exception compared to "genuine" men:

My way of life
Is fallen into the sere, the yellow leaf
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but in their stead,
Curses not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.¹⁸

He might engender pathos had his path not been strewn with blood. Macbeth lacks that last component of "a man" that Macduff defines on hearing of the slaughter of his family:

17. Act III, scene 3, lines 136-138, p1014

18. Act V, scene 3, lines 22-28, p1023

MALCOLM: Dispute it like a man
MACDUFF: But I must also feel it like a man¹⁹

As Lady Macbeth becomes more feelingful, more "human", Macbeth becomes less so. He hacks his way to the core of the nightmare bereft of sleep or sustenance, filled with "unnatural" supernatural images as even nature turns against him.

Macduff is his perfect counterpart. A man who becomes a monster is faced with a monster (not of woman born) turned man and victim of Macbeth's most monstrous crime. On hearing Macduff is his nemesis, Macbeth throws away his sword. Then Macduff furnishes Macbeth with the one thing he has most desperately sought: public acknowledgement of his monstrous, exceptional unnaturalness.

The moment of completion is the moment when the hero finds a significant definition in relationship to his experience of the confusion of multi-classification and places himself firmly in a specific value system. For both Macbeth and Faustus, although their original actions negate the values of their societies, ultimately place themselves firmly within its moral evaluating order: they become the exceptions that prove the rule.

Macduff makes actual Macbeth's state of mind. ("Ah, Mephistopheles!") Released by the external confirmation of his inner state, his worst fears confirmed, Macbeth is no longer strung between free will and "destiny", between man and monster: he is free to take meaningful action, though it lead to his certain death.

The play, however, does not end with Macbeth's death. Malcolm, having grown up under the shadow of Macbeth's rule, has learned the value of personal experience and feeling and is aware of

19. Act IV, scene 3, lines 219-222, p1021

the dangers of absolute trust. Under the bloody head of Macbeth who exposed the shadow side of their world and elaborated its limitations, Malcolm takes heed of those lessons. He creates Earls, enlarging the scope for public reward, acknowledging personal ambition and the need to recognise excellence, expanding their tight little world.

Macbeth and Faustus present the clash between cosmologies in the same structural perspective. However, the terms and working out of that process are fascinatingly different. Faustus's story is essentially internalised, a manifestation of an internal state with Mephistopheles functioning as the context from which Faustus cannot free himself. Macbeth's story is externalised, his actions affecting and changing an entire society. The integrated world view and Macbeth's relationship to it are regulated through the characters who make up his society. At the opposite extreme, the Personalised perspective is presented through Lady Macbeth. Each presents a coherent cosmology neither of which Macbeth can wholeheartedly embrace. The Thane of Cawdor is evidence that the society itself was already stretching at the seams. Macbeth's example forces a readjustment.

Like Faustus, Macbeth is unable to find the language and perspective to justify or even mitigate his actions and is thus condemned to continually repeat them. Like Faustus, he gains nothing from his bargain. Lady Macbeth is integral to this process. She presents an entirely opposing approach to the same act. One, arguably, more commensurate with its enactment and which leads to a different pattern of behaviour and response.

We cannot know whether, had they shared her personalised perspective, Macbeth and his Lady would have reigned happily ever after. Many, in both fact and fiction, have. But we can assess her

bad press. The application of the model suggests that the play's emphasis is on the justification and responses to the murder rather than the deed itself, both personally and socially. It is often overlooked that it is not Lady Macbeth who becomes a mass murderer. When she dies, her failure dies with her, leaving a reminder of the inter-dependence of human life. Perhaps our bitter judgement of her rests not in her character but in our own horror at seeing the shadow of our own world view elaborated in such extremes.

GREEK DRAMA: IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL CONTEXT

No one is free of cultural bias. Inevitably, our unquestioned assumptions regarding the place of Man in the cosmos will not only define the proper subject matter of Life, and hence Art, but also affect the way we interpret what we see. One advantage of an external model is that it allows us to test our observations and interpretations against something besides our own unshakable truths.

Antioone.¹ for example, is generally assumed to be the tale of a young woman's desperate and heroic (because hopeless) battle to achieve freedom of self-expression. The G/G model, however, shows the play to be moved by a head-on collision between Integrated and Personalised perspectives in which Antigone is neither the spokesman for Individuality nor the central pivot of the action. The central character, the character embodying the progress and thematic development of the play, is Creon.

Antigone appears for only about a third of the piece; the last section of the play deals with the deaths of Creon's family. It is difficult to insist on a tone of self-realisation when the person meant to be expressing themselves is dead and has no stake in events. More important, however, is what Antigone herself says and does.

What we are looking for are the basic underlying assumptions that inform the choices, actions, explanations and justifications of the characters; the fundamental percepts that form the basic structure of their reality, the basis of their morality and their ultimate justification: in what terms do they place and value themselves in

1. Textual quotations: Sophocles, Antioone. Sophocles. The Theban Plays. ed. E.F. Watling, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1989 edition.

the world? Assessing their responses in context, we can compare their actions with their overt intentions, their purpose with the results. Here is a quotation from one of Antigone's major speeches to Creon:

That order did not come from God. Justice,
That swells with the gods below, knows no such law.
I did not think your edicts strong enough
To overrule the unwritten law
Of God and Heaven, you being only a man.
They are not of yesterday, or today, but everlasting.
Though where they come from, none of us can tell.
Guilty of their transgression before God,
I cannot be for any man on earth.

Only cursory knowledge is needed to identify this as the language of strong G/G. God over man, "unwritten laws", a timeless context reinforced by tradition, the inference that the law of the Gods is written before and above Man and makes meaning of his existence by placing him in relationship to its larger, inter-active signifying context.

From the start, Antigone speaks not of herself and her will but of an integrated world whose truth she confirms and sustains through her adherence to ritual and tradition. She has only one purpose: to bury her brother. Her justification, the tradition that confirms Man's relationship to the greater pattern. Once she buries him, her purpose is complete. She tells Creon openly that she has no argument with him and that there is nothing he can do to her. Being mortal, she will inevitably die. Having fulfilled her purpose, her value is confirmed, so she has no objection to dying early.

Antigone successfully plugs herself and her dead brother into the closed circuit of the Integrated system. For her, there is

2. Lines 450-458, p138

nothing left to do: tradition, family, ancestors and the gods have been acknowledged and her place with them confirmed.

Ironically, it is not Antigone who projects a unique, personal perspective, but Creon. At first, things look fairly simple and straight-forward. He is king of Thebes and, as King, makes a new law: the perpetrator of the war may not be buried. He has no doubt the law will be obeyed, for the punishment is death. Instantaneously, he hears the body has been buried. From this moment, Creon is in a state of perpetual perturbation. He cannot make one decision or take one action that has its desired effect. Everything backfires.

Creon's situation is the reverse of the pattern shared by Faustus and Macbeth. Creon believes he is acting as the representative of an integrated world, upholder of its traditions and its major spokesman. However, whenever he speaks he proclaims his own superiority.

Creon's new law is a case in point. There is a traditional time-honoured ritual for dealing with the dead, even enemies. Creon's law is an overt denial of tradition. It changes the significance of burial from a ritual reinstating the dead with humanity, tradition and the gods to one which augments himself. Thus, he pits himself barefaced against the gods and the rituals that bind them to Man.

When Antigone speaks of roles, she implies an inter-active relationship with the cosmos through family and tradition: when Creon mentions roles, he invariably stresses his superiority over the Other emphasising the obligations due to him. His law, too, is an attempt to impress his own power over citizens and gods alike; not only Antigone, but Haemon, Teiresias and the Chorus note this change.

The debate between Antigone and Creon boils down to defini-

tions of significance through "the law": the law of the gods vs. Creon's law, the laws of man. "Law" itself is a manifestation of the underlying value system of the society. Briefly, the law of the gods is by definition inclusive and timeless. It encompasses everything and is reflected everywhere. Acceptance of the primacy of gods' law allows the confident assumption that everything, no matter how seemingly meaningless and confusing to the human eye, has significance in the larger, signifying pattern of the gods. Pre-established, traditional rituals reinforce and perpetuate the relationship between Man and God so man may be assured of perpetual meaning.

The law of Man, represented by Creon's law, is exclusive. The purpose is to distinguish between the acceptable and the unacceptable in terms of man's constructs. It separates the meaningful from the meaningless in man's limited, personal judgement. Thus, Creon reserves the right to distinguish Polynices from Eteocles, both brothers and both dead, and place Polynices outside meaning by denying him the fundamental human right to burial.

Throughout, Creon uses the terms which traditionally confirm integration to insist on his own superiority, emptying them of meaning.

When I see any danger threatening my people
... I shall declare it.

No man who is his country's enemy
shall call himself my friend.³

I have made a proclamation
Concerning the sons of Oedipus ...
I am determined that never, if I can help it
shall evil triumph over good.⁴

3. lines 222-223, p131

4. Lines 229-239, 242-243, p131/2

Creon has appointed himself ultimate judge. No one is in a position to tell Creon what he is doing, even when they can see it. He belittles others by comparing them unfavourably to himself. He refuses to listen to Antigone because she is a woman; to Haemon, his son, because he is too young and "only" his son. He accuses both the Sentry and Teiresias of taking bribes to undermine him, and, of course, Teiresias is "old".

Teiresias summons up the magical power of prophecy, the foresight of the gods, and tells Creon the death of his son will pay inevitably for the two deaths he has caused, thus divesting Creon of control.

You cannot alter this, The gods themselves
Cannot undo it. It follows of necessity
From what you have done.

"Necessity" is a concept integral to G/G. In a Personalised world, the superior man is considered able to make choices independent of external laws and forces. The successful self-made man is not dependent on good fortune, the gods or others. He takes life into his own hands and moulds it to reflect his inner value. There are no automatic outcomes, rewards or punishments. His success is proof of his unique exceptionalness.

Creon rushes to the tomb and tries to undo his deed. Antigone is dead. Haemon kills himself, denying his father. Creon rushes back to find his wife, too, has taken her life. Now, the man who needed no one and who, through the reversal of terms which once spoke of perpetual inter-relationship spoke of his own superiority over all bonds, is entirely alone, bereft of meaning.

The progress of the Chorus through the play parallels Creon's. Both begin by lauding the superiority of Man. Through a process of mitigation, the Chorus paints pictures of ever-decreasing excellence and control until, at the end, as Creon is stripped of all relationship and meaning, the Chorus concludes:

Of happiness the crown
And chiefest part
Is wisdom, and to hold
The gods in awe.
This is the law
That, seeing the stricken heart
Of pride brought down,
We learn when we are old.⁶

The only thing worth having is wisdom and that always comes too late.

The process of redefinition Creon unwittingly begins cannot be checked because the change in meaning cannot be communicated. Creon himself cannot see that he is changing the references and hence the significance of the terms. Haemon, Antigone and the Chorus cannot tell him: they speak only the restricted code confirming the integrated system. In other words, they have no language with which to make distinctions and elaborate. The restricted code, by definition, cannot elaborate itself; it can only reiterate its own confirmation. The impossibility of communication propels the action to its necessary end.

If Creon is the hero, then why is the play called Antigone? Antigone is the known constant. She is the last living voice of integration before it becomes dismantled. Her sureness, her sense of purpose, her unquestioning belief in the significance of mankind in an inter-dependent cosmic pattern is the last vestige of a coherent, confident inter-active cosmology. When she dies, the possibility of

6. Lines 1380-1387, p162

meaninglessness enters the life of Man. Where meaning was once "self-evident", it must now be reasoned. Antigone represents what has been lost.

In the light of this perspective, several areas of investigation present themselves. One is the question of "cultural bias" in response and criticism. It stands to reason that since we live in a Personalised world, we would consider the sanctity of the individual and the difficulties of establishing that sacred uniqueness against conformity (the more institutionalised the more difficult and "heroic") as the most meaningful, powerful, resonant concern of "art" - all the more so "great art". The very image of a single person (the more defenceless the better) confronting the representative of the larger group or institution automatically records an image of the "nobility" of preserving the sanctity of Self. The fact that Antigone is a woman compounds this effect. However, on the one hand, Antigone never speaks of anything but the preservation of the status quo. Her unanswering defence is that she is doing what has always been done and her allegiance to her family, her ancestors, and the gods are her source of worth. Although she certainly adheres to her position, even unto death, she seems to have no concept of individualist integrity, insisting her deed confirms the integrity of the larger whole and her place in it as a significant, functioning part. On the other hand, everyone onstage, excepting Creon, agrees with her. This is neither the language nor the situation of "self-realisation". However, it clearly exposes a gap between the text and the critical projection, opening a field for further investigation.

Once the pattern of Antigone is gleaned, the unravelling of problems like the function of the Chorus, both in the specific play, and by implication, in Greek Tragedy, become readily available.

Other areas of possible investigation also become viable. The pattern of Antigone, for example reflects a close similarity to the pattern of Shakespeare's King Lear.

Where most Tragic heroes inherit disorder, Lear and Creon, beginning in relative equilibrium (all Creon had to do was bury the body as prescribed by tradition), both take it upon themselves to create disorder virtually from scratch. The dissolution of the established cosmological construct is created by the central character unwittingly turning the language designed to confirm the validity of G/G to promote his own personal superiority, thus rendering both the terminology and the construct meaningless. The society is left with an *ad hoc* collection of references, turned and manipulated at will, for which there is no underlying signifying consensus. In the final scenes, a rather dazed society contemplates the lack of meaning, imbued with a sense that significance has passed away:

The oldest hath borne most; we that are young
Shall never see so much nor live so long.⁷

This unusual ending accentuates the similarities between the plays. Aside from comparisons between the two playwrights, an investigatory comparison might isolate the fundamental differences between Greek and Jacobean Tragedy - the salient elements which would identify them. It might also shed light on the inherent differences within the projections of the two societies. For example, the possible unearthing of the underlying assumptions that give rise to the use of a Chorus rather than a host of individual characters to represent and speak from the social context, revealing not only inherent differences of focus within two societies but also assumptions regarding

7. Shakespeare, William, King Lear: Complete Works, ed. Peter Alexander, Act V, scene 3, lines 325-326, pl113

the use and social significance of the stage itself. The functioning of the three daughters in comparison with Antigone also suggests further social and dramatic implications.

The communicative inter-relationship between society and its artifacts implied in the model offers the possibility of reading back from the plays to the society on a sub-structural rather than literal level, freeing the critic from value-laden comparisons projected from cultural bias and suggesting alternative approaches to both dramatic issues and social analysis. One might consider the Greek Tragedies, for example, in an extended context informed by the implicit changes in the society as reflected through the sub-structural development in the plays. A brief comparison of Antigone with The Phoenician Women⁸ might give a general impression of how such a study might proceed.

Where Antigone poses a decision and follows through the consequences, The Phoenician Women begins long after the decisions have been made; the action is the final series of consequences of previous action, looking back to the sources: Eteocles' and Polynices' dividing their role, caused by Oedipus' ignoble action, itself the consequence of Laius' denial of the gods' warning by begetting a child; this, in turn, following from Cadmus' killing Ares' dragon and the colonisation of Thebes. Thus, the history and ancestry of Thebes, itself, is one of the issues at stake: are Thebans the progeny of Cadmus' hords or the dragon seed?

When the play opens, the hold of the Integrated cosmology is loosening. The signifying bonds of Group and Grid are discarded through the progress of the play. The play seems to argue that

8. Textual quotations: Euripides, The Phoenician Women.
Euripides: Orestes and Other Plays, ed. Philip Vellacott,
Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1983 edition

colonisation and expansion have been significantly instrumental in the dismantling of the fabric of mutual signifying.

Unlike most Greek Choruses, The Phoenician Women are not a collection of villagers or men or women of the society, but captives, slaves, proof of the superiority of the might of Thebes, but disenfranchised from the Group. As such, they have a particularly detached view of the situation.

All the major characters find themselves in untenable situations where either the demands of role are antipathetical or they are forced to choose between the Group and their private interests. Polynices, for example, seems to hold an Integrated view. However, not only is it tempered by his experience as an outcast, but his brother's actions have forced him into a position where the integrated values no longer seem workable. To survive in a world in which he has no place, he has had to promote himself. He found that an exile's life is like a slave's. Position and rank in Thebes had no currency elsewhere:

POLY: There is one rule-succeed. Friends vanish if you fail

JOC: But royalty gave you some position

POLY: Its a mistake not to be rich⁹

Polynices is now in an insidious position. Even in his own terms, he cannot win unless Eteocles gives up the throne, but Eteocles is no more willing to give up the throne than Polynices is to live in Thebes without claiming his "just due".

Truth by its nature tells a plain tale: and a just Cause needs no subtle presentation. Both these bear A fitness in themselves; but the unjust cause is sick For its own essence, and needs devious remedies.¹⁰

9. Lines 426-428, p249/50

10. Lines 468-471, p252

The implicit reference is an absolute, meaning-making pattern into which everything fits and in which Man and his actions take their natural, significant place. Thus, Justice is absolute and self-evident.

Now I am ready, when I receive what's mine by right
To take my army out of Theban territory,
To receive my house and live in it one year by turn
And only render it for another year to him.¹¹

Eteocles, however, is not "ready". He isn't even interested in making a case. Possession is nine tenths of the law, and he is in possession. His argument has the cynical "worldliness" of the successful individualist:

...That greatest of all goddesses, absolute power.
This valuable possession ... I will not
Let go to another, when I can keep it for myself.¹²

The play has an unusual structure. The action proceeds through a series of scenes which overtly focus on the exposure of justifying terminology. The choice is repeatedly offered: the Group or the Self. The promoter of Group values in one scene is invariably confronted with the same choice in the next scene where he renounces the Group for preservation of self. Thus, the precepts of Group and Grid are dismantled before our eyes, transformed from the sources of value and meaning to tools by which to manipulate others as the characters shed their mutual responsibility to acquire personal gain.

The elaboration of the disintegration of G/G values and the movement to g/g is further exacerbated by the characters' being overburdened by conflicting obligations of role. Polynices, for example, is both usurper ruler and brother to the usurper. The obligations of one

11. Lines 483-486, p252

12. Lines 538-540, p253

role counteract the obligations of the other. He is both "at home" and on "enemy" ground. He prays to the gods for justification for killing his brother! Creon is caught between State advisor and father. The characters are in counter-demanding roles. (This is also a problem in Hamlet, although the process and resolution of the action are markedly different).

Jocasta's situation is agonisingly unresolvable. As mother to the antagonistic brothers, she cannot be mother to one without denying the other. She has further counter-demanding obligations as both Queen of Thebes and its citizen. The situation itself removes both the justification and the value of the roles and renders their enactment ineffective *a priori*. Although both the characters and the Chorus suggest that women are the last vestiges of the significance of relationship because they are mothers, this primal, fundamental role is rendered untenable. As both her social and familial roles are divested of significance and effect, Jocasta takes her own life, an arguably 'personal' decision.

While Polynices stands on the platform of ultimate Justice (which just happens to benefit himself) and Eteocles on his own power and possession, the other characters appear to be worrying about Thebes. Creon confronts Eteocles, asking him outright to choose between his own will and the well-being of Thebes. Eteocles predictably insists that his personal interests will benefit Thebes:

For a man to yield the greater and accept the less
Is cowardice ... Besides it is a disgrace to me
If he gains everything he wants ... What reputation
Would Thebes have, if through fear of Argive spearmen I
Gave my throne to him.¹³

The greater the power, the greater the man. As the most powerful, he

13. Lines 541-548, p253

sets the values and terms for others as he has already for Polynices. The terms of G/G are put to the service of the individual.

The process is developed when Creon, in turn, is confronted by Teiresias. Ironically, Teiresias himself seems curiously self-absorbed. He complains of his infirmity, congratulates himself for obtaining victory for Athens, and stresses his personal dislike of Eteocles. When pushed, he admits there is one way to save the city: Menoecaeus, Creon's son, must throw himself from the rocks where Ares' dragon was slain. Creon's impassioned citizenship evaporates in the face of personal attachment. He sounds rather like Eteocles.

I have not yet reached such depths
As to allow my son's throat to be cut for Thebes.¹⁴

(Although he did proclaim to Eteocles that no sacrifice was too great for Thebes!) Whether we agree is irrelevant. After all, our world is fundamentally Personalised, and if this were absolute truth, there would never be war! The point is, first, the total reversal, and, second, the use of "patriotism" and Integrated values for the manipulation of others, especially when there is little risk to oneself.

Menoecaeus tends to get poor critical acclaim, hailed as a cardboard character, and gets rather short shift in the play itself. Creon advises his son to leave Thebes and take refuge in the temple where "Heaven will guide you" assuring him, practically, "I'll send you gold". Menoecaeus, however, is the only character in the play for whom Group and Grid form the unquestionable pattern of meaning. He throws himself, secretly, off the rock. Tellingly, the heroism of the act goes unremarked, even by his grieving father who never acknowledges the success of the sacrifice and who might, in other cir-

14. Lines 192-193, p270

cumstances, have found some comfort in it.

Among other indications of the disintegration of G/G and the ascent of g/g is the question of the "curse". Curses abound, from Ares' rage at the death of his dragon to Oedipus's curse against his own sons. Markedly, little distinction is made between the curses of the gods - the explicit cosmic responses to events through the imposition of necessity - and those of humans. Even Jocasta's retelling of the story-so-far emphasises a tension between the "cursed" family and wilful individuals breaking the bonds of unity and relationship by acting on their own behalf. This tension begins the play and forms its action. The ever-lasting curse becomes, finally, an excuse, an exoneration of blame when one's own will has been defeated, part of the process of the abnegation of responsibility.

The gods are treated in the same way, called on in desperation, used to support one's own will, and given final responsibility for one's failure, a vehicle for personal exoneration. From every angle, the play presents a world where the last vestiges of a coherent integrated value system is disintegrating and illustrates the process of this dismantling as its tenets are increasingly utilised for the promotion of personal ends and the manipulation of others. The action moves from a teetering context of integrated values to a position of personalisation where the isolated individual is adjudicated in terms of "personal quality" and experience.

This process arguably casts the critical question of the validity of the end of the text in a new light, for the "completed" ending completes this process and marks a significant closure to the cosmological arguments and analysis within the play. Antigone and Oedipus assess the validity of a range of values and responsibilities, discarding them one by one. The suggestion is that the world

has qualitatively changed. These values no longer apply; holding on to them can only be personally destructive.

OEDIPUS: Let the world hear and see what I suffered.
(personal suffering offered as a signifying value)
ANITGONE: Why harp on suffering; Justice does not see
suffering
Still less does she punish
The insensate folly which inflicts it.¹⁵

Suffering is a meaningless criterion; suffering is not proof of one's worth in a signifying whole, but cause and proof of man's foolishness.

OEDIPUS: I am the man whose name was exalted to heaven
(fame)
In grateful songs of triumph
When I solved the baffling riddle of the dog-maiden
ANTIGONE: Why hack back to the dark ages of the Sphinx?
The victory was long ago...
This dark day's misery, this anguish of exile
This wandering search for a place to die
Was waiting for you father.¹⁶

Fame and past successes are valueless in the present. They mean nothing in the light of the shame and desolation of the present (corresponding to the last Chorus in Oedipus Tyrannus and emphasising the present-orientation of personalisation).

ANITGONE: I shall reap fame
For my example of duty
Towards my father in his misfortune
... I will go at night and bury him
If I have to die for it.¹⁷

She will use the last vestige of integrative obligation to gain personal immortality for herself.

OEDIPUS: Say goodbye to the girls you knew here
(social obligations)

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15. Lines 1725-1728, p294
16. Lines 1729-1736, p294
17. Lines 1757-1764, p295

ANTIGONE: No, my own tears are enough
 (social ties give way to personal experience)
 OEDIPUS: then cry for help at altars of the gods
 (religion, integrative confirmation)
 ANITGONE: The gods are weary of my troubles
 OEDIPUS: Appeal to Dionysus at Semela's tomb
 (try alternative religion)
 ANTIGONE: To the god for whose honour, in days past,
 I dressed in a Theban fawnskin ...
 An act of worship that won me no reward,¹⁸

The Penguin edition ends on this speech. Philip Vallacott, editor of the Penguin Classics, has eliminated the final lines of the play with the following justification:

What is certainly spurious is the final six line speech of Oedipus adapted from the end of Sophocles' Oedipus Tyrannus: it seems to replace the original ending now lost.¹⁹

I am, of course, in no position to speak of the lost ending, if, indeed, there is one. However, Oedipus' speech and the final Choric comment bring to completion the cosmological discussion and the process from disintegrating integration to Personalisation with precision and force.

OEDIPUS: You that live in my ancestral Thebes, behold this Oedipus him who knew the famous riddles and who was a man most great. It is I alone who go dishonoured in sad exile from the land. Yet why do I lament these things and mourn for them in vain? The constraint the gods lay on us we mortals all must bear.²⁰

Oedipus places himself at the centre of significance and retranslates events to speak of his own personal significance. Even Thebes becomes significant through reference to himself and his deed; his suffering, proof of his worth.

18. Lines 1765-1775, p295

19. p68

20. Euripides, The Phoenician Women. The complete Greek Tragedies. ed. David Grene, Richmond Lattimore, Euripides Volume V. trans. Elizabeth Wyckoff, University Press of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1957, lines 1757-1762

The Chorus continues:

O great Victory, stay with me
All my life.
Not cease to give me crowns!²¹

It would be ridiculous to assert that the Phoenician Women, who have made such a point of their exile and their disassociation from Thebes except in terms of their physical safety, would suddenly be taking on the role of spokesmen for Thebes. The process from Integration to Personalisation has released them from the bonds of Grid, captivity and moral obligation by transferring significance to self. Their final call is a celebration of personal success.

These lines complete the process begun in the first lines of the play. The untenable ambiguities created by the growing power of the Personalised ethic as it broke down the Integrated cosmology is resolved by the embrace of Personalised evaluation and justification. The consequent isolation is explicitly expressed. At the same time, the clarity from clearing out ambiguities and settling on an alternative justifying organisation provides both thematic and emotional release and completion.

The similarities with Sophocles might more fruitfully be examined through a comparative analysis not merely of the words alone but of their relationship with their relative context.

Although its incidents chronologically precede the burying of Polynices in Antigone, The Phoenician Women presents a social context more deeply immersed in the combat between Integration and Personalisation than Sophocles' play. Where Antigone begins in assumed agreement of the precepts of Integration, even by Creon who turns those terms to centre himself as the source of significance,

21. Ibid. Lines 1764-1766

Euripides' play begins in the world where the tenets of Integration are so weakened that every situation becomes ambiguous and untenable. Thebes, for example, is both saved and ruined. The play resolves in the embrace of Personalisation, albeit with a sense of profound loss and an overt emphasis on the resulting isolation.

The comparison of the process of cosmological analysis reflects the changing nature of Greek society as it is reflected in the two plays and offers a fresh perspective by which to consider the canon of Greek Tragedy (if not Greek drama) from Aeschylus to Euripides in relation to their social context. This perspective might also offer a viable context by which to reassess the questions of authenticity of textual passages, as well as the bases on which traditional judgements have been made.

TRAGEDY OR TRAGIC: MODERN REALISM

A study of Tragic form inevitably faces the issue of "the tragical": the argument focused on the definition of modern realist "tragic" plays in comparison with "classical" Tragedy.¹ Content-based criticism has virtually centred definition on a combination of content, emotional response and an implicit hierarchy of excellence. Hence, the appellation "tragedy" automatically implies that the content of the play has superior "seriousness" giving the work superior excellence in comparison to other dramas: an assessment pregnant with implicit, value-laden assumptions.

The process of establishing formal definition through isolating the cosmological perspective and active social function of a play is less judgemental. The assumption that all forms have substance and purpose allows distinctions to be made without implicit assessment. Preferences are private to the critic.

Group/Grid analysis reveals "the tragic" to be an expression of the Personalised cosmology. It depends on the underlying precepts of Personalisation for its form, content and justification and moves towards their confirmation. Moreover, the terms are fixed and absolute. Their validity is never open to question nor is any alternative conceivable. "The tragic" is a distinctly different form from "Tragedy" with an entirely different cosmological perspective and a different active relationship with its society.

In Tragedy, the validity of the opposing reality structure

1. This distinction is made by several critics. For example, George Lukacs: "Old Drama" and "New Drama"; Northrop Frye: "High Mimetic" and "Low Mimetic". I will call the modern form "the tragic".

necessitates an active deconstruction of the prevailing cosmology, exposing its underlying precepts for examination. "The tragic", however, is firmly entrenched in and bounded by the unquestioned precepts of Personalisation and concentrates on the disparities within them. There is no hint of an alternative structure by which Man's purpose and significance might be evaluated. The focus is on the imbalance caused by abuse or unfairness within the unalterable structure. The ultimate purpose of this genre is to redress that imbalance.

"The tragic" pivots on the fundamental paradox at the core of the Personalised vision. Its justifying concept - the sacred value of the individual by virtue of indigenous uniqueness - conflicts with the public evaluation of the person in terms of his ability to impose his value on others - "success" corroborated by social recognition and material reward. Both emotional and thematic content depend on the assumption that the individual is the centre of meaning.

The genre enlists sympathetic identification for a central character robbed of the acknowledgement of intrinsic worth by a world which can only confirm external, socially recognisable success. The paradox is neither exposed nor elaborated, but stated as context ("tragic" *a priori*) within which the specific situation takes place.

Central characters are mired in misunderstanding, lack of appreciation and/or devaluation. The action works to engage the audience in sharing the sense that value has not been adequately assessed. (This form has much in common with some comic forms where characters are misjudged or allotted the wrong social assessment implying the evaluative terminology has been misused or misunderstood. But never that it is invalid!) The terminology itself is not

open to question. Both the assessment and its relevance depend on and confirm the sacredness of the individual. The genre functions as a restricted code confirming and revitalising the validity of the Personalised cosmology.

Even the use and definition of stage space exposes essential differences between Tragedy and "the tragic". The open staging of Tragedy, demanding action and incorporating a broad scope of time and space, projects an image of Mankind equal to and effective in the world around him. The confined permanent set, however, presents Man as a solitary figure in a world superior in force, effect and duration. The permanent set implies an unalterable social structure. Even memories and dreams become "privatised" within it. The structure contains the personal crisis, but its permanence implies it cannot be affected. While augmenting his importance, the image presents an over-riding picture of the individual trapped alone in a structure which, by definition, is impersonal and invulnerable. It also confirms the concept of society as a collection of separate individuals.

The isolation of the individual from social interaction:

1. Confirms him as the centre of meaning.
2. Confines relevant content to unique essence rather than deed and effect.
3. Emphasises personality over action.
4. Eliminates the possibility of change.

The action is invariably set after the time for effective action has passed, further corroborating this process. This image of the isolated individual is not specific to the situation. Rather, it sets the scene for it: the image is presented as an encapsulation of the human condition. Ironically, it both glorifies and reduces the individual: a paradox parallel to and describing the central paradox in the Personalised cosmology.

Arthur Miller's plays are often at the centre of the argument over genre, and their accepted excellence make them appropriate illustrations in this discussion. Death of a Salesman is a model of its genre. The Crucible offers a unique opportunity to examine the complex interaction between the playwright's intentions and the necessities of form dictated by his implicit world view.

Miller's plays are firmly entrenched in the reality structure of 20th century America: a g/g cosmology couched in the terms of scientific materialism and capitalist economics, where "capitalism" has become a synonym for "freedom". Willy Loman epitomises the failure of the inner man to make itself manifest in the outside world and gain entitled recognition *per se*.

I: DEATH OF A SALESMAN²

The action of Death of a Salesman is the elaboration of Willy's personality and personal history. Significantly, it takes place at the end of his life when the opportunities for decision and action have passed, eliminating the possibility of qualitative change. By necessity, the action moves backwards, gathering past information through flashbacks and reminiscences to elaborate Willy's uniquely personal situation. Through Willy, the fundamental paradox underpinning the g/g cosmology is highlighted in terms which confirm and reinforce the Personalised system. Thus the play exemplifies elaboration confined by a Restricted code.

The central image of the individual isolated and confined in the structural unit of his home augments the individual by citing him

2. Text quotations: Miller, Arthur, Death of a Salesman. Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1982.

as a *raison d'être* of the play while, ironically, reducing him by isolating him and stripping him of the possibility of effective action. Centralising the action in the elaboration of a single character confirms the individual as the centre of meaning. Within this basic format, however, the play is elaborative; explaining, assessing and reassessing the predicament and character of Willy, first in terms of the relationship between past and present and, eventually, between reality (fact) and dream/ideal (fiction). The flashbacks, memories, conversations build a specific, detailed understanding of Willy, furnishing explanations to delineate his state of mind and ultimately becoming justifications for his suicide. They also develop a process of isolation of which the suicide is the final image.

The terms are set with subtle skill. The play opens as Willy, returning from a selling trip, is both literally and figuratively losing his grip:

"I suddenly couldn't drive anymore. The car kept going off to the shoulder"

Linda's responses consistently reinterpret the situation to confirm Willy:

"I don't think Angelo knows the Studbaker ... You never went for your new glasses"³

Laying the blame on outside forces, she generates an image of Willy victimised by an uncaring and over-whelming world and introduces the prime issue of "blame" which will eventually become an essential element in the problem of personal validation.

Theoretically, Linda's opinions should be as good as any-one's; however, they are never validated by effect. They carry less

3. Act I, p9

weight than social consequence. Her position illustrates another aspect of the central personal/social dilemma.

"There's no reason why you can't work in NY"
"They don't need me in NY. I am a New England man. I'm, vital in New England."
"But you're 60 years old. They can't expect you to keep travelling every week".⁴

The use of the ubiquitous "they" further compounds the image of isolation and sets Willy (and Linda) against a larger, more powerful but unidentifiable force on which he is dependent. The "they" of "the tragic" confirms the isolation and victimisation of the single individual as an *a priori* condition. (In contrast to Tragedy where the situation is a direct consequence of human interaction).

This power temporarily centres on Howard and sets the backward-looking comparison between past and present out of which evolves the tension between "reality" and ideal.

"If old man Wagner was alive, I'd a been in charge of New York now... But that boy of his, that Howard, he don't appreciate"⁵

This is the core and purpose for which the play exists: the rebalancing of the central paradox by demanding appreciation of the individual for its own sake; the celebration of human value by dint of its uniqueness. "Appreciation", "attention": the theme song of the play and the purpose of its existence.

Since the central paradox, whatever its terms of expression, is assumed to be a condition of existence, the characters are condemned to race from one side of the seesaw to the other in a fruitless attempt to balance it. The Lomans' attempt to assess Biff, for instance, veers from intrinsic worth to financial assessment in barely

4. Act I, p9/10

5. Act I, p10

a sentence:

L: But, dear, how could he make any money? ...I think if he finds himself you'll both be happier
W: How could he find himself on a farm. Is that a life .. he has yet to make 35 dollars.⁶

The anomaly in evaluating personal, spiritual value (inner worth) in monetary terms (social acknowledgement) is not questioned. Willy's justification for suicide, for example, rests, first, in the insurance money "proving" his value and validating Biff: "Can you imagine that magnificence with 20 thousand dollars in his pocket?" Second, in the conclusion that his life, in the great cash register in the sky, "rung up a zero". The double bind created by evaluating abstract qualities through monetary means is presented as an insoluble dilemma. Although the frustration adds to the dramatic tension and sense of pathos, it cannot but confirm the terms themselves, especially as no alternatives are considered.

The same dilemma is thrashed out between Biff and Hap. It is often suggested that Biff represents an alternative perspective. However, Biff is merely taking another ride on the seesaw. Biff's "solution" is not an alternative but a compromise. Biff accepts the precepts and terms of the social order and the paradoxical dilemma at its core without question. His "solution" is to ignore one side in preference to the other: poor but happy; happy though unrecognised. Unfortunately, "happy" is not under guarantee, and ignoring half the problem while still accepting its validity is neither a solution nor an alternative. Moreover, Biff's compromise itself is tainted by his proviso that he can't have his dream without owning the ranch. In other words, if he had the monetary means of personal success, he

6. Act I, p11

could then give up the success and be happy. (Biff's hunger for money and reward is clearly illustrated in his stealing).

Arguably, had Miller entertained the validity of an alternative reality system, Biff might have been the central character, and we might have seen a kind of reverse FAUSTUS, an attempt at restructuring fettered by the terms of personalisation. The choice of Willy as protagonist signifies the unquestioned acceptance of the personalised cosmology. No other way of giving meaning to human existence is considered. The internal paradoxes highlighted are presented as the insoluble *a priori* condition of existence. It is a closed circuit.

The acceptance of this double bind forces both the playwright and the characters inwards to obtain meaning. Several routes are tried:

1. The reinterpretation of events in terms more supportive to the individual. A rebalancing from social to personal which mirrors the process and demands of the play. This process is encapsulated in Linda. Unfortunately, genuine as her assertions are, and touching to the audience, they do little to assuage Willy's need for public acclaim. Personal interpretation is found wanting.
2. Retreat into the self (the common route of "self-realisation") exemplified by Biff. However, the odds are stacked against Biff's "finding himself" since there are no external terms through which he might be seen to do so except money and public acknowledgement. Hap is making money and accumulating success, but rather than being "happier", he is more discontented and driven by that discontent to continue the process. This impasse reinforces

the paradoxical tension between the implied "spiritual" value of "finding oneself" and the evaluation of life in material terms. A separation between the inner and outer man and a confusion between the terms of inner life and those of public acknowledgement seem indigenous to the Personalised vision.

3. A further solution rests in the reversion to the primary informing precept of the social cosmology divested of all complexities for immediate emotional consumption. This is the process and purpose of the play.

LINDA: Willy Loman never made a lot of money. His name was never in a paper. He's not the finest character that ever lived. But he's a human being.

The play exists for this simple revelation. Herein lies its social function. The action strips the paradoxes away to reveal the glimmering fundamental principle that informs and justifies the social cosmology to inspire the audience with the truth at its core. Invested with the power of theatrical identification, restated in simple emotional terms, the celebration of the informing ethic allows the social imbalance to be momentarily redressed. Unlike Tragedy, "the tragic" does not expose and assess the underlying precepts of the prevailing cosmology but strives to confirm and revitalise them.

As a Restricted Code, the play itself cannot analyse its underlying premises. However, the G/G model affords us the terms by which to isolate them and see how they work within the text.

Failure

Willy Loman is a failure. There is no attempt to evaluate his life in any other terms nor to consider he could have been other than what he was. Even Linda's "obituary" paints him in fairly dreary terms. His career as a travelling salesman, itself, places him fairly low on the social scale, and there is no indication that he was or ever could have been a hugely successful salesman. His glorification of Dave Singleton, itself, implies Willy's own mediocrity.

The terms of assessment are accepted without question. The "fact" of his failure is essential to the process of the play and is reinforced in several ways. First, by the varying successes of other characters. Ben, who embodies the ideal workings of the system. Howard, by dint of inheritance and capacity, and most important, Charlie and Bernard who, through both public success and genuine humanity, prove the validity of the system.

Second, no terms are suggested by which Willy might be seen as anything but a failure. No alternative values or restructuring is even hinted at whereby his "failure", for example, might be minimized in relation to more admirable qualities: loyalty, perseverance, intent. Neither Miller nor the characters acknowledge these qualities except to highlight their misdirection: thus, they become levers for psychological explanation. The point is simple: despite his unquestionable failure, Willy Loman deserves "attention" because he is a person.

Third, because the play is set at the end of his life, reassessment through action is denied him. The play is a final accounting. Willy, as he says himself, "rings up a zero". His failure as father, salesman and social contestator is essential to the

social and moral purpose of the play. The emotional identification of the audience is centred on the principle of intrinsic worth in the context of failure. This emotional bonding elicited from those who have succeeded (the audience) for one who has not produces a rebalancing of the imbalance endemic in the system. The purpose not only of this play but of its genre is to realign and confirm the system, stimulating and securing its perpetration.

Terminology

The delineation of Willy's character suggests one of the reasons for his failure rests in his obvious misinterpretation of g/g terminology. The emphasis on misinterpretation creates dramatic tension in relation to his failure as a salesman. In other words, it is suggested that his understanding of the social precepts was distorted and lead to his inability to succeed. At the same time, it is implied that he may not have had the ability. This tension allows two opposing responses to take place simultaneously. First, he probably never could have succeeded but nonetheless deserves attention for his basic humanity. Second, if only he had got it right there would have been no problem. The first feeds the power of simple emotional confirmation of the basic precept. The second confirms the system by suggesting that failure lies not in its weaknesses but in the misinterpretation of its tenets.

Objective truth

If every individual offers a unique perspective and interpretation, then communication is, by definition, problematic. As Bernstein suggests, an Elaborated code is necessary. However, if "truth" is relative, where is the common ground where communication,

even elaborative, can take place? The assumption of the existence of "objective reality" supplies a coherent set of terms. The audience, of course, must be party to the distinction between personal interpretation and objective fact so they can arbitrate.

Distinctions are made. Fantasy, dreams, ideals are categorised as "fiction" as opposed to "reality" or "fact". The distinction between fact/reality and fantasy/fiction is assumed to be objective and recognisable. The categorisation is judgemental. "Fantasy/fiction" evokes negative implications whereas "reality/fact" is given unquestioned positive valence and becomes a standard by which all else is evaluated. One need hardly point out that there are other ways of perceiving dreams, fantasies and ideals. Nonetheless, the forging of a clear opposition between "fact" and "Fiction" with the assumed superiority of "fact" (arguably a product of scientific materialism) forms the moral context of the play.

The action comes to focus on establishing factual truth in opposition to the "fiction" created by dream, fantasy, exaggeration. Biff strives to find self-definition by stripping these "fantasies" to the naked core of objective fact. The veneration of "reality" in preference to "fiction" is presented as a moral duty to separate truth from lies. Lies, however, imply an intention to deceive. Nonetheless, although Willy's deceptions are not the product of malice, the implicit corruption of "fiction" gives Biff the moral high ground. Willy's distortions of the "truth" are presented as evidence of his pathological personality and contributory to his failure. Since these "fictions" are imbued with intense emotional content, this confrontation and the annihilation of the "fictions" by stark reality works both to build a sense of growing emotional tension and to deplete and diminish Willy in relation to the world

around him. One could argue that Willy's "fictions" allowed him some of the self-respect he craved and gave motivating purpose to his life, but no alternative terms are offered to reinterpret his attempts at self-aggrandisement and self-evaluation. Having distorted both his life and his sons', they are further evidence of his failure.

Willy's fantasies, however, are direct expressions of the precepts of his world. His terminology, the language of personalization; his models, the exceptions that prove its rule, the paradigms validating its structure. These ideals are held up as standards. They describe and measure the distance between Willy's life and the accepted standards of success. The ideals themselves, however, are not held up for scrutiny.

For example, it is understandable that Willy, a salesman, would isolate personal attractiveness and personality as foremost characteristics. Moreover, the social emphasis on personal uniqueness is itself an encouragement to glorify personality. The assumption of personal worth by dint of uniqueness plus the emphasis on personal quality in the acquisition of role and reward does not tend to dwell on details like hard work and honesty. Social evaluation by financial achievement concentrates on ends rather than means.

It is also Willy's misfortune to have known a living example of the individualist ideal. Ben's story, like Goodyear and Edison, feeds back into the system proof of its own validity. These successes mark external standards by which the success of others is judged, a judgement, however, not of quality but quantity, not of process, but result. By these standards, too, Willy has, of course, failed.

Group and Grid

No alternative is considered to the g/g organisation. There is no discernible group. The family itself is one of the shackles that prevents self-expression and definition. Love and commitment are caught in a double bind with the need to separate and extricate self.

Since g/g offers no prescribed boundaries, boundaries are, predictably, confused, both between individuals and in areas of personal loyalty and allegiance. There is difficulty adjudicating where personal choice ends and social or practical demands and obligations begin. From Willy's assumptions that length of service and loyalty, *per se*, create functional value to Biff's assumptions that excellence in sports and a winning personality entitle him to steal, boundaries are sited as insolubly difficult areas.

Self-identity and relationships with others are necessarily problematic. If the individual is the centre of the universe and everything ultimately speaks of him, then, from Willy's point of view, what can Biff be but a commentary on himself? Again, we confront an obvious paradox. How can Biff "be himself" if he is the projection of his father and whatever he is expressing turns out to be a comment on Willy? The same paradox, of course, works in reverse. What Willy is and does, in Biff's terms, speaks of Biff. How else can one make sense of the way Biff loses all sense of meaning and purpose when he discovers his father with a prostitute? This complex blurring of boundaries between individuals marks the personal relationships of the play. All three men are constantly scrambling to peel away relationship and achieve separate definition and identity. (Compare, say, Hamlet, Orestes, Antigone who find their validity and a platform of action precisely through the rediscovery of relationship).

Inevitably, the attempt to find one's justification through the Other as a projection of oneself is doomed to failure. The projection itself can only be an unachievable ideal. Hence, the confused but emotionally powerful argument over Willy's "right" to be Biff's father which highlights both confusions of terminology (personal/social) and the implications of role in g/g society. The confusion between achieved role and defining role seems endemic to the cosmology and works against successful evaluation of the person.

Biff questions Willy's "right" to identify with the role of "father". To be a "real" father (not a "fake") and, by inference, a valuable person, Willy had to have adhered to an ideal of fatherhood. The purpose of the term, however, is to delineate biological/social relationship. In a personalised context, the problem is insoluble. Relationship is the subject matter of Integration. The thematic content of Personalisation demands the elaboration of distinction. Biff is imposing a value-laden ideal in a context directed towards isolation. The concept of the ideal role-player runs parallel to the social ideal; both, by definition, are unobtainable. Failure is endemic. Thus, life, once again, is "tragic" *a priori*.

Individual imperfection is held to be a basic flaw in the material of life, insidiously implying that perfection is obtainable if not morally demandable. Imperfection can then be seen as personal failure. After all, if the individual is the basic unit of meaning, it stands to reason that the individual must be a unit of perfection: a moral unit. Any distortion of this unique perfection is thus a destructive action, if not a sin. The crisis between the individual as perfect moral unit and the ideal as unattainable perfection informs the system, giving the central paradox a moral context.

The unacceptable imperfections of existence converge in the attempt to gain self-esteem in the exoneration of fault or "blame". Success, once obtained, relieves the individual of responsibility for past actions and eliminates questions of error, fault or blame. Blame lessens a person's worth.

"Blame" and "responsibility" are not synonyms. Responsibility implies action, consequence, even public effect. Blame is entirely personal, devaluing the person in his own eyes and in comparison with others. The shift from responsibility to blame corresponds with the shift from action to explanation, from the social to the personal.

The g/g world has no positive concept of group or grid. The threat of the Other to absorb, control or distort one's uniqueness precludes the validation of either. As the play develops, however, a clear image of a covert grid begins to develop. The illusion of personal freedom is replaced by Willy's increasing consciousness of his lack of power and his dependence. Those who have attained success can exert pressure on those who have not. Willy discovers he was not a valued part of a "group" but one of a number of individuals who temporarily worked in the same direction for their own ends, valuable only so long as they also fed the ends of the more powerful.

The price of individualism is freedom not only from the bonds of G/G but also from its advantages and supports. Places on the grid are, by definition, replaceable. The "group" is merely a temporary alliance. The time span of g/g is immediate; memory is short. Without traditions to give significance to obligations, to provide precedence, each generation starts anew, each man creates his own world. It is up to the individual to impose his worth on others

before they can impose theirs on him. Without the inter-related obligations of G/G, neither group nor grid have value.

The tenuous alliances built on familiarity and mutual benefit are replaced with impersonal demands which expose the functioning of the convert grid. As the insignificance of the individual by social evaluation becomes unavoidable and his/her lack of power unmistakable, so the demand for acknowledgement for essential human uniqueness increases. "The tragic" begins at this point. The tension between the ideal informing the Personalized cosmology and its inevitable denial in practice is the fulcrum of the drama: the revitalising and confirmation of the ideal, its purpose.

The climax of the play is the impassioned argument between Biff and Willy which crystallises the unresolved paradox between the inner and social man and the anomalous evaluation of human worth in material terms. Biff's attempts to find self-definition produce a closed circuit which is totally self-defeating. When Biff applies the terms of the system he finds both himself and his father utterly devalued.

BIFF: I'm a dime a dozen and so are you
WILLY: I'm not a dime a dozen. I'm Willy Loman and you are
Biff Loman.⁸

The stark simplicity of the unresolvable paradox creates a vacuum demanding the contrary reaction from the audience. The basic ideal that informs and justifies the moral fabric of their reality is stripped of any anomaly and complexity that might ordinarily diminish its power. The audience is obliged to confirm the informing principle: no one is "nothing". The one shared value is the sanctity of the individual. Denigration of the person threatens the very fabric

8. Act II, p105

on which even one's right to claim superiority depends. Thus, the paradox is momentarily resolved through return to the justifying principle, the single shared value on which the validity of the cosmology rests. The audience's emotional response confirms not only Biff and Willy but themselves.

(In the light of the audience's rediscovery of the moral signifying principle of their world view, Willy's last speeches, woefully uncomprehending, are all the more pathetic. The "moment of realization" is a gross distortion.)

Requiem

It is often argued that Biff's negative comments over the grave suggest a fundamental critique of the entire system. Although the stage directions indicate Miller's sympathy for Biff ("with a hopeless glance at Hap") Biff really offers no more than generalized disdain. Moreover, the overall emotional climate combined with Charlie's vociferous support gives both emotional and practical weight to Hap's position. Biff, of course, offers no alternative perspective.

- C: No man only needs a little salary
C: Nobody daat blame this man ... Willy was a salesman ..
he's a man out there in the blue, riding on a smile and
a shoeshine .. a salesman is got to dream, boy.
H: I'm gonna show you and everybody else that Willy Loman
did not die in vain. He had a good dream. It's the
only dream you can have - to come out number one man.⁹

The audience, riding on a tide of the glorification of individualism and a sense of loss, are only too willing to pay homage to Willy's existence and sanction his failure, mistakes and "dreams". Willy's suicide is a sacrifice to the restoration of social equi-

librium.

Having restored the balance by stripping the basic paradox down to the informing precept, the play then subtly removes any discomfort that might have been engendered from the misuse or ignoring of people like Willy: "It's the only dream you can have ... to come out number one man". In other words, it by-passes any responsibility of either the reality system or the individual by implying that the situation is unavoidable, an agonisingly regrettable fact of life. The speech suggests "we are all salesmen", confirming the pursuit of evaluation through wealth, the vision of life as a market place, the need to impress one's own importance on others is a "natural" drive.

Linda's obituary, too, overrides the paradoxes within the system by augmenting the emotional content of the loss of a unique person. The audience leaves the theatre inspired by the glorious principle of the sanctity of the individual that justifies their social reality structure. The imbalances created in its enactment are rebalanced, its validity restored. The purpose of the play is to reconfirm the cosmology by reminding the audience that every individual is valuable despite social consensus. Simultaneously, it accepts and condones the process by which the majority fall through the net of credibility.

The audience are confirmed in two ways. First, they, too, despite faults, are human and valuable. Second, that they are feelingful people who are guided by the fundamental principle of individual sanctity. Confirmed in their basic humanity, they are condoned in their pursuit of impressing their uniqueness over others and exonerated of the contradictions.

Even the image of the house in the closing stage directions

of Death of a Salesman emphasises the image of one man isolated amongst the many. The form itself is a paradigm of Personalised cosmology. It takes the underlying premises for granted and confirms their self-evident truth. Any alternative is inconceivable. What is put up for discussion are the terms of evaluation within the fixed structure, their application and realignment. Unlike Tragedy, "the tragic" does not expose, question or elaborate the underlying precepts of the cosmology. The relationship of the genre to its society is not critical but reinforcing.

No matter what he did or was, Willy Loman could never have achieved "the dream", for it is an ideal. Whereas in Tragedy, the final vision encourages the audience to experience the Specific in terms of the Possible - What IS superimposed on WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN: Lang and Parole - "the tragic" superimposes what IS on WHAT NEVER COULD HAVE BEEN, the IDEAL, emphasising the gap between the two. Again, Man's life is assumed "tragic" *a priori*. The genre is an expression of Personalisation and functions to redress the imbalances endemic to the system by celebrating its basic premise so it might be perpetuated.

The foregoing analysis is made possible through the delineative context of the G/G model. The play itself allows for no such elaboration. It is a closed circuit, a Restricted Code, dependent on and directed towards the self-evident tenets of Personalisation. The comparison, however, is not intended as an evaluative criticism. The informing precepts of Tragedy and "the tragic" are different; their relationship to their cosmologies are different and will inevitably yield different results. The "tragic" has an active, significant place in the Personalised world, not the least of which is to furnish metaphors to inform and perpetuate the cosmology. The point is that

the differences are actual and relevant. Their delineation could provide a basis for methods of classification and avenues of investigation.

II: THE CRUCIBLE¹⁰

The underlying assumptions of a cosmology will shape the subject matter into forms which validate its structure and affirm the inviolability of its precepts. A writer may consciously, however, choose subjects and have overt intentions which are at odds with the demands of his world view, thereby creating a crisis between form and content.

Death of a Salesman displays a tight coherence between form and content. Both express and celebrate the sanctity of the individual. In The Crucible, however, the author's conscious intention and his overt subject matter conflict with his deepest assumptions creating a misfit between form and content, serendipitously allowing a clearer insight into the function of form as a manifestation of cosmology.

Miller's overtly stated purpose in The Crucible is to present a social analysis of the phenomenon of witch hunting in 17th century Salem with the express intention of developing a parallel with and, thereby, insight into the McCarthy hearings of the 1950's.

The reader will discover here the essential nature of the strangest and most awful chapters in human history.¹¹

The operative words are "essential nature", implying analytic deconstruction. However the assumptions forming and informing the

10. Text quotations: Miller, Arthur, The Crucible, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1982

11. p11 (Note on Historical Accuracy)

investigation and the terms by which it is conducted make an ability to sustain, let alone elaborate, the complexities of social interaction impossible. The precepts of Personalisation quickly sabotage the author's intended investigation by forcing the focus from the social to the personal. This shift creates a crisis of form.

The first three acts, for example, delineate a kind of dramatised documentary enacting the development of the witch hunt through the personalisation of the participants. The fourth act, however, could have come from another play. Centring on Proctor, it isolates his untenable position and drives to a magnificently emotional climax where he states the fact of his individuality supported by a somewhat romantic eulogy on personal freedom. Despite its power, Act 4 neither supports the other three acts nor assists the intended promise to reveal "the essential nature" of the event. The diversion from the social to the personal has caused a reversion to primary premise.

This automatic shift from the social to the personal sabotages even contextual information. For instance, much is made of the estrangement between John and Elizabeth stressing that they have not slept together for over a year. It also emphasises that Elizabeth never lies. Her announcement that she is pregnant casts aspersions on both pieces of information.

The terms of Proctor's "heroism" are also questionable. Davenant asks him to sign a false statement so he can "tell the village". Although Proctor signs, when he learns the signature is to be made public, he rips the paper, makes a rousing speech about his "good name" and is taken to die. The scene is undoubtedly powerful, but logically bemusing. Both common sense and traditional terms of heroism intimate that the "heroic" path is to insist on exposure and

object to secrecy. The issue is forced and unclear. Its effect depends on the emotive force of the confirmation of individualism *per se*: the power of the informing precept overrides coherence of context or terms.

The shift from the social to the personal invades every element of the work rendering even pursuit, never mind accomplishment, of the original purpose impossible. The presentation of the society itself is a minefield. Mary Douglas (Purity and Danger) sites the Puritans of 17th century America as a classic example of High Group/low grid, suggesting the emphasis on purity which holds the society together and justifies its boundaries as well as its superiority over other, often larger, groups, as the source of its propensity to witch hunt. In his introduction, Miller, also, suggest as much.¹² However, the characters in the play show no sense of Group. Neither their language nor actions are informed or nourished by the sanctity and strength of group, let alone the superiority and justification of group identity.

The characters speak and behave like a collection of self-conscious individuals for whom the community is a restriction, if not a positive threat. Difference and isolation are emphasised. They distrust each other, and this distrust is accentuated by its incorporation into the play's elaboration of personal motivation. Moreover, Proctor's distrust of the group augments his value. In their "development" as characters, personal beliefs, ideas, restrictions and motives define them. Significantly, "Puritan" becomes "puritanical", the emphasis shifted from "purity" to restriction, from the justifying and motivating principle of Group to a denial of the

12. p15

principle of unity.

This shift from social to personal also corrupts the terminology of the investigation. As a social phenomena, 17th century witch hunting and the McCarthy hearings present correlative patterns. However, the focus on the delineation of personal motive and the demands of scientific materialism with its emphasis on objective fact create a bizarre literalism which eliminates the essential links between the events and makes nonsense of the comparison.

The analogy, however, seems to falter when one considers that while there were no witches then, there are communists and capitalists now.

The examination has moved from examining the social assumptions, organisations, pressures producing witch hunts (see Vinegar Tom) to an emphasis on personal malice and personal response. If you know there is "no such thing as witches" then the term can only be a wilful guise. The "belief" in witches is not seen as a social manifestation of social, moral and metaphysical preconceptions but, at best, a delusion, and, at worst, a menacing weapon in the hands of the malicious to destroy the innocent. Thus, the action of the play begins a process of separating the truthful from the untruthful, the victims from the oppressors.

The resulting implication that social inequilibrium, like witch hunts, are the result of personal malice enacted by those who will lie to acquire wealth and power leaves something to be desired as social/political analysis. It certainly doesn't illuminate the workings and implications of social structure, the relationship of the individual to the social context, or the moral assumptions on which these are based, any of which might have lead to entertaining

the possibility of social, if not structural change. Nor does the accompanying conclusion that social problems may be solved through "self realisation", despite its emotional power, reveal much political insight.

Although Miller's introduction shows a strong intellectual comprehension of the complexities of the situation, when he turns to dramatise them, his adherence to the personalised cosmology and its sacred precepts precludes the complex dramatised analysis he intends.

The choice of hero is central to the creation of form and development of thematic content. One can safely assume that any character is a potential hero, especially in an historical incident, for each has his/her own story. The choice of central character will inevitably be dictated by cosmological preconceptions.

One of Proctor's qualifications as "hero" is that he is set apart. He is arguably the character least involved in the witch hunt. Living outside town, estranged from his wife, distant from the community, his qualification lies in his implied independence and lack of contagion. His distrust of the community and his disbelief in witches marks him implicitly as a "free thinker", a man of intelligence and more of an individual. His critical attitude becomes a marker for "objective truth", increasing his isolation. Proctor's "confession" about Abigail is socially ineffectual. It functions as an almost ritual self-cleansing and reads back to Proctor's signalling bravery and honesty.

On the one hand, Proctor's separation from the social context robs him of influence and effective action just as age robs Willy Loman. On the other, this isolation emphasises his uniqueness. By dint of Proctor's detachment, the play is directed towards the individual standing against the mass and consequent affirmation of

personalised values, disinclining it from the possibility of effective interaction or social analysis.

The conflict between conscious intention and implicit assumptions produces ambivalences even in the choice and justification of the hero. Isolating one's representative of the preciousness of individuality *per se* by emphasising his superiority over others insinuates a value-laden hierarchy of "individuals" which rather subverts the absoluteness of the informing precept. Thus, not only is the original intention sabotaged by the underlying assumptions which determine the form, language and structure of the discussion but the terms by which those precepts claim their validity are distorted by the contradictory forces at work.

Proctor's position in the event and the terms by which he earns his place as "hero" set the play inevitably towards the celebration of individualism. However, one may look at the event from a different point of view. There is a character in the cast who is genuinely coincident with this world and who is actually the initiator of the action. He was available for the role of hero. We can examine his qualifications for the role and assess the structural change that would take place if events were perceived from his perspective.

Unlike the other characters, Nathan Hale seems to have been flung fullfledged from 17th century Salem. He is not only equal to his world but feels himself equipped to deal with it. His language is informed by the sanctity and privilege of Group. As representative of the small regulatory body and an acknowledged expert, Hale respects the hierarchy and feels an obligation towards the responsibilities of his work. His actions change that world significantly. His language reflects a sense of both social and metaphysical respon-

sibility:

Here is all the invisible world, caught, defined and calculated. In these books, the Devil stands stripped of all his brute disguises. Here are all your familiar spirits - your incubi and succubi, your witches that go by land, by air, by sea; your wizards of the night and of the day. Have no fear now - we shall find him out and if he has come among us, and I mean to crush him utterly if he has shown his face.¹⁴

(The echo of Faustus is unmistakable.) Note the constant use of "we". While others pursue their own ends through an elaborated code designed to separate and make distinctions, Hale's words imply an integrated cosmology where the world of man reflects and is participant in the work of God and the Devil. Hale is confident that through "blessed reason" he might read their work in the physical world.

We cannot look to superstition in this. The Devil is precise; the marks of his presence are definite as stone, and I must tell you all that I shall not proceed unless you are prepared to believe as if I should find no bruise of Hell on her.¹⁵

Ironically, although The Crucible is imbued with the terminology of Christianity, on the whole it is markedly mundane. Religion, for these Salemites, is a convenient tool. Metaphysics is reduced to prejudice, malice or ignorance. For Hale, however, the "spirit" is active and vital. His terminology and logic constantly draw on images of integration and an assumption of mankind as participant in a metaphysical universe. His sincerity is established through his consistency.

14. Act I, p42

15. Act I, p41

The man's ordained; therefore the light of God is in him.¹⁶

Nurse though our hearts break, we cannot flinch; these are new times, sir. There is a misty plot afoot so subtle we shall be criminal to cling to old respects and ancient friendships. I have seen too many frightful proofs in court - the Devil is alive in Salem and we dare not quail to follow wherever the accusing finger points.¹⁷

His consistency assures the audience that Hale is without guile or malice, so he may function as sincere, if not objective, observer. However, if one imagines Hale as the centre of the action, both the shape and the significances of the event markedly alter. Responsibility for the action rests with Hale. The action he takes has both personal and social consequences. With Hale at its centre, the relationship between the individual and the society would be intrinsic to the context of the play, and the terms by which the witch hunt evolves would activate a discussion exposing underlying precepts.

Hale represents the larger community which he sees as a reflection of God's Kingdom. He comes to perform his "sacred" role within this small section. His language emphasizes the weight and responsibility of his obligations to Man and God. His action affects not only his physical world but also the terminology by which its relationship to the cosmos is experienced and expressed.

Through the course of the action, the limits of reason become actively manifest. God's will is no longer clearly writ in the machinations of the physical world but seems unfathomable except in the inherent sanctity of life. Hale's terminology does not

16. Act II, p63

17. Act II, p68

change, but its references do. Hale's preconceptions are challenged, exposed and elaborated through the process of the action. The man who confidently told Parris his books were heavy "because they must be; they are weighty with authority", ends saying:

Let you not mistake your duty as I mistook my own. I came to this village like a bridegroom to his beloved, bearing gifts of high religion: the very crowns of Holy Law I brought and what I touched with my bright confidence, it died; and where I turned the eye of my great faith blood flowed up. It is mistaken law that leads you to sacrifice. Life, woman, life is God's most precious gift; no principle, however glorious, may justify the taking of it. I beg you, woman, prevail upon your husband to confess. Let him give his lie. Quail not before God's judgement in this for it may well be God damns a liar less than he that throws his life away for pride ... Woman, before the law of God we are as swine! We cannot read his will!¹⁸

Were Hale the hero, this speech would set Proctor's decision in an active dialectic with Hale's changing perspective. Proctor's death, the consequence that elaborates the underlying precepts and justifications. The incompatibility of metaphysics and reason would be exposed, for it is not Hale's "faith" that blinds him but the application of reason to its tenets allowing reason itself to grow monstrously out of hand. His final statement is a testament of pure faith. An analysis of the worship of reason would have been activated through structural organisation.

Tragedy demands a central figure whose personal position is also socially consequential, whose dilemma places him in active confrontation between two social constructs of reality. To assume the glory of individual uniqueness appears, alas, to imply the isolation of the individual, the elimination of metaphysical content, and

18. Act IV, p115

the ineffectiveness of the person in a *de facto* antipathetical world. The choice of Hale as hero would necessitate entertaining the possibility that Man might be co-incident with, effective and responsible within, the socio/political, even metaphysical, universe.

The very idea of an integrated world view, however, is inconceivable to Miller. The suggestion that relevance might emanate from hierarchies of relationship and mutual obligation offends his sacred "truths", the organisation of reality he takes for granted.

The Crucible furnishes an illustration of how the underlying assumptions which give rise to form can sabotage the writer's intended purpose. It is an example of the closed circuit created by the restricted code designed to support and confirm the cosmological status quo. The final image and emotional impact depend on reducing complex socio/political issues to a confirmation of individual uniqueness and the pathos of its loss.

The argument implicitly confronts the oft bandied question: is modern Tragedy possible? A Tragedy born of a Personalised world would demand a working concept of integration to provide the necessary dynamic. Whether the play records the factual verisimilitude of the playwright's physical world is not a valid standard. Nor does it belittle or invalidate a work if we cannot immediately transform the world using the play as a charter. These criteria themselves are expressions of scientific materialism. The question is not whether we can isolate integration working in the outside world but whether the concept of integration within the action of the play has the validity and integrity in the context of the action to oppose the personalised system and expose its underlying precepts.

20th century Tragedy requires the projection of a workable concept of Integration whose active viability in the enactment of the

drama not only throws into relief the underlying precepts of personalised reality but also makes manifest the possibility, even desirability, of the precepts of Integration.

The presence of Tragedy in the 20th century proves its possibility. The reappearance of the form implies a crisis in the social fabric, suggesting the tenets of personalisation are becoming manifestly untenable in a manner which exposes its weave, demands analysis of its underlying precepts, and projects the possible viability of its opposite.

In the last section of this study, I will elaborate the process of this cosmological confrontation as it is manifested in four modern Tragedies.

ARMSTRONG'S LAST GOODNIGHT - MAN TO MAN

Two entirely different worlds meet head-on in Armstrong's Last Goodnight¹: two opposing ways of ordering experience, perceiving and defining reality. Two different contexts through which meaning is given to experience. In one, men and their actions are given meaning and importance through their relationship with the time-honoured institutions they represent. In the other, the man himself makes his own meaning and invests the world around him with the symbols of his own power and importance so that this world ultimately speaks of him and his unique value. His validity stems from his ability to impose the power of his person upon his world.

In the safety of each enclosed world, a man knows who and what he is, what his function and place is in the great scheme of things. His actions take comprehensible effect and can be evaluated. The problems incurred by expansion or inclusion, even negotiation, extend the boundaries of these worlds and create a no-man's land where meanings are ambiguous, words multi-dimensional, and action forced to extremity. Armstrong's Last Goodnight takes place where these two worlds meet.

Through two separate heroes, Arden examines the dilemma of the individual caught up in a reality which does not cohere with his own and yet in which he must take meaningful and effective action. In a context where everything he takes for granted is called into question, how does a man find validity? When the basic assumptions by which he defines his relationship with the world and interprets its significance are challenged, how can he take action which will

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1. Text quotations: Arden, John, Armstrong's Last Goodnight, Arden: Plays One, The Master Playwrights, Eyre Methuen, London, 1977

achieve viable and meaningful results? Ultimately, the question is: what is a man?

The play progresses through a series of scenes where characters come from a known, secure environment where the "rules" of life are understood and shared into one which is, in these respects, entirely alien. Although it all takes place in the same country, the structure and value systems of the two societies are so different, even the most basic assumptions become questionable.

SCOTLAND

As the play begins, a growing consciousness of itself as a cohesive group moves Scotland to seek out and define its borders, establish rank and responsibility and unite under one King, symbol of its collective importance. Obviously, uniting against a common enemy is a fruitful way of forming group identity. The hierarchical pyramid of rank establishing obligation from commoner to King is a traditional manner of ordering an inter-dependent society. Once united under James, the Scots will derive their personal value from their membership to the whole, Scotland, and from their personal positions and obligations within it. However, this concept of unity under a single King is not a comprehensive tradition throughout Scotland. Although James obviously stands for a large body of people, the lowlanders continue an ancient social system based on tribal alliances that celebrate not unity but the unique power of individual leaders.

It is important that the strong group/grid society is, in this play, a NEW concept for Scotland. It is a new order built upon old and borrowed tradition. Its major threat is Henry, King of England, the country from whom this long-established order has been

borrowed, and not Armstrong. Armstrong is a "problem" which the integrated society naturally assumes can be absorbed into the whole. Henry is the King of a united nation whose validity has been proved by time. The validity of its identity is taken for granted by both the English and the Scots. The proof of James' validity, and therefore that of his new nation, will rest in his ability to negotiate equally with Henry.

LINDSAY

As James is the symbol of a united Scotland, Lindsay is the accepted representative of King James. Statesman, poet, wit, the embodiment of the highest values of his society (above all, the power of reason), Lindsay is the acknowledged paragon of his world. He represents the best of a "civilized", time-honoured traditional society. As poet, he is a maker of metaphors speaking the ultimate rightness of his world. Since Lindsay is not only the King's Herald, but also his tutor, it is suggested that the King's intentions as well as his words are those he imbibed from Lindsay, making Lindsay both mind and voice of the King. As both King's spokesman and tutor, Lindsay himself is a metaphor for the closed-system between the integrated society and its members.

Lindsay's privileged position in the society allows him a liberal dedication: he sees all men as essentially the same. To him, man's most essential and unique quality is the power of reason: he reasons and is reasonable. Lindsay's "overriding purpose" is his belief that people can always be persuaded to act rationally in their best interest. Since, in his own world, there is little discrepancy in ultimate interests, Lindsay is incapable of entertaining the possibility that another's idea of his own best interest may not

coincide with his. "Reasonableness" assumes an agreement about the fundamental questions of how life achieves meaning. Without this agreement, words themselves change meaning and "reason" itself is meaningless.

Lindsay and those he represents assume Man at his best to be a confident part of a secure and meaningful whole. His position in the larger structure gives him validity. His power of reason distinguishes him, always leading him to ultimately confirm the shared assumptions and ideals of the whole. But Armstrong sees life and his place within it in entirely different terms. Although Lindsay finds Armstrong "unpredictable and irrational", Armstrong is neither. He behaves strictly in accordance with his assumptions about the way reality is structured and valued. Where position in Lindsay's world is ascribed, in Armstrong's it is earned. Lindsay, ideal representative of a society where personal action is valued most highly when it represents and feeds into the institutions of power, is out of his depth in a world where the highest values are personal and personal worth is not only earned by achievements, but continually has to be re-earned. Lindsay cannot give Armstrong "gravity" because he cannot give credence to a basis of action so totally opposed to the fundamental assumptions on which his own actions are based.

Given that in Lindsay's world the parts ultimately speak of the whole, it follows that he would develop a tendency for generalization. However, his inability to see others as anything except "materials of my grief", pawns to be moved for political advantage, prevents him, also, from having any insight into the motivating purpose of the specific individual.

His confidence in the unity between Men and role prevents him, too, from recognizing any discrepancies when his own purpose

begins to run against the purpose of his role. It is natural to the G/G society to assume no discrepancy between man and role or between means and end. Although Lindsay's original purpose is to entice Armstrong into the arms of the greater whole, he eventually becomes obsessed with doing it his own way and thereby winning personal glory by not only accomplishing his mission, but by doing it in accordance with his own principles against the odds. Blinded by his assumptions and the ideals he believes his society to represent, he is pushed to the edge where he cannot take viable action unless he deny his own purposes and thus his own ideals.

Lindsay sets out to protect and enlarge the Kingdom by winning over Armstrong, thus ensuring the rightness and continuance of his world and what it stands for. The perfect example of his society, representative of all it holds best, Lindsay moves from the Scottish court to entice Armstrong - with diplomacy - into the loyalty of the King. Full of confidence, secure in his fundamental assumptions about the way reality is structured, he is unable to conceive of a way of seeing the world in which Armstrong's actions could have meaning. He cannot see him in his context or hear his words. With the best intentions, Lindsay releases a series of events which cannot be halted except by the very methods he abhors.²

Lindsay sets out to prove the perfection of the integrated society by ensuring its continuance and the effectiveness of its ideals. He "proves" only that its superior organisation allows it to absorb actions antithetical to those ideals. Having begun secure in his world and confident of its rightness and his own place in it,

2. In my opinion, Lindsay is modelled on Rev. Nathan Hale, incipient tragic hero of The Crucible. If the conscious intention was not there, the pattern of action is.

Lindsay is ultimately left with a knowledge of its fallibility, its willingness to sacrifice ideals for expediency. From blooming inter-dependent confidence Lindsay moves to a position of cynical alienation.

ARMSTRONG

Armstrong is the ideal representative of his society, a "big man" individualized world where a man's value is set by the amount of power and following he has amassed by his own endeavours. His power is not invested in him from a whole larger than himself, but taken, and his ability to take and hold it confirms his worth and demands confirmation from others. Here, the individual is the centre of meaning; his power speaks of his importance. Success is the ultimate justification. Thus, the safety of the whole depends on the preservation of individual safety. Honour stems not from preserving the whole but from the enactment of loyalty given freely or through blood lines both across the board to other self-made leaders or vertically to followers who freely give their loyalty in recognition of the personal superiority of the "big man" and his power to protect them. The individual forges the terms of his own worth and gathers round him those that acknowledge him as the most powerful. Thus he owes his personal protection and loyalty to them. He sets his own terms and values on the world around him and his world thus speaks ultimately of him. The world does not give him meaning. He gives meaning to the world. Where Lindsay, poet and maker of metaphors, speaks tradition, Armstrong, ballad-maker, makes tradition.

THE BALLAD

The ballad is a celebration of an individual or event set outside its context by its preservation in verse and song, thus transcending time and space. So Robin Hood and the Mersperis for example are celebrated for their uniqueness, outside the context of their societies. (The three Estates, however, speaks implicitly of the society in which it was forged). When we first meet Armstrong, he is singing his own song. As events occur, he casts them into an iconographic form. The ballad speaks of him alone. In his own eyes, he is a legend in his own time, larger than the world around him. In the ballad, the stresses inherent in the individualized society which soon become unavoidably explicit, are ignored. Uniqueness of character is emphasized. And, when speaking or singing of the pure and unique value of his own person, Armstrong speaks true and clear, with no speech impediment.

In this society, action speaks louder than words. Armstrong's stammer does not decrease his stature. In fact, the speech impediment accents Armstrong's relationship to his world. Armstrong speaks of himself as if he is already removed from time and place, and those around him speak his mind and words. His whole world speaks of and for him. The fact that others speak for Armstrong gives him extra stature. It is a visual and verbal compliment to the iconographic image of himself he creates in the ballads. We are continually reminded that Armstrong's world reflects HIM. He doesn't have to speak for himself. His world not only bears his mark, but speaks with his tongue. Where Lindsay speaks for his society, symbolized by the King, Armstrong is the subject that his society speaks.

Through Lindsay, Armstrong sees an opportunity to confirm and enlarge his own power and stature by extending his network of

alliances to include an acknowledgement of his equality with the King. But Armstrong's intercourse with Lindsay brings into the open the conflicts and contradictions inherent in the individualized system. As Armstrong finds himself incapacitated by conflicting alliances, he attempts to embody the ideals of his society outside their social context, speaking of himself as all-powerful, unmitigated by social concerns. Having extricated himself from context, he is then unable to discern the dangers in that context fatal to himself.

Lindsay comes to Armstrong to make boundaries and establish roles. To him, they are not only "natural" and necessary but enhancing. He means to establish boundaries and limitations in a world where boundaries are traditionally established not by agreement, but by the length of a man's arm: the longer his reach, the greater his power. (This is how Maxwell eventually loses Armstrong: Armstrong moves beyond his reach.) Roles are earned by personal prowess and indicate not function but worth. The Lieutenantship Lindsay offers Armstrong is meant to define a relationship between Armstrong and the King and set Armstrong within the social system. However, to Armstrong it is a symbol of the King's recognition of Armstrong's unique personal value, a confirmation of what he himself always knew - that he is beyond the system. The elucidation of boundaries and role obligations that Lindsay reels off mean nothing to Armstrong. The Lieutenantship is contained entirely in the collar; the collar is booty (like the cap, etc), which adds to his own personal, unrepeatable worth.

This society, however, is already under some stress before Lindsay comes. In a society where morality is the concern of the individual conscience, the individual's good and safety are the

ultimate justification, but they are by necessity secured by a network of personal loyalties. Armstrong is caught between loyalties. Individual conscience can only be extended so far, for alliances are made in different directions for different reasons. When tension develops between conflicting concerns, the individual is squeezed between them and justification becomes an uneasy hedging of bets.

Although Armstrong justifies his actions on information that Wamphrey was threatening his family's safety, he still makes an oath of friendship knowing that he is about to betray it, thus casting aspersion on his own honour, even in the eyes of his family. His alliance with Stobbs, which, being bonded by marriage, takes precedence over others, has placed Armstrong in a situation where his word, his honour, is distorted. In a world formed by "voluntary" alliances, "honour" must eventually become matter of degree and will ultimately rest in a man's relationship with himself. As Armstrong warns: "There's none that may in a traitor trust/Yet trustit men may be traitors all."³ In the individualized society, there are no shared ultimate values beyond the individual himself.

The larger the expanse over which these voluntary alliances reach, the more complex and the more prone to mitigation, to hedging, to distortion, to treachery. The double bind is that honour and loyalty themselves must be internally hierarchicized in practice, although not in principle. (In an integrated society, honour is a direct reference to one's actions in relationship to the good of the whole. Thus Lindsay maintains his "honour" though he loses "himself".)

3. Act I, scene 3, p261

When the second Armstrong questions Armstrong's actions with Wamphrey, Armstrong answers "What's your name? ... See that you keep it." But Armstrong has given his "name", his oath, to Wamphrey knowing that he meant to betray him. Even his closest kin question it and ultimately Armstrong is forced to the ultimate justification: it is right because he could and did do it. Having succeeded, he is justified. The ultimate value is personal power. If you get away with it, it's right. Here, he would agree with Lindsay: Armstrong is "the man" because he killed Wamphrey, not "in spite of".

The question is clearer for Stobbs. Wamphrey's "assault" on his daughter gives him the absolute right to destroy him. For Armstrong both this cause and the hearsay plan to attack his family are second hand. His real reason, which carries less validity in the field of personal honour, is that he owes more trust to Stobbs. After all, trust is trust! In theory, if not in practice, each individual has the right to be taken on and expect full faith. When Lindsay arrives in the lowlands, the paradoxes inherent in Armstrong's society are already becoming explicit.

We are introduced in Lindsay in terms of his "function":

I am Lord Lyon, King of Arms, Chief Herald of the Kingdom of Scotland. It is my function in this place to attend on the deliberations of the Scots Commissioners and so fulfil their sage purposes with obedience and dispatch.⁴

The commissioners are struggling over setting the limits and obligations of the relationship between Scotland and England. Not surprisingly, their main problem is "the security of the borders". They are in agreement against "unruly borders"; in other words, confused definition of group limits.

4. Act I, scene 1, p247

The job they give Lindsay is, in fact, beyond his function. They appeal to his personal and unique qualities: "Are ye serpent enough to entwine the Armstrange in your coil?" Predictably, Lindsay sees no contradiction in this. Having reached the position he is in and acquired the rank and accompanying admiration of all as a result as much of his own characteristics as by the role he has played toward the maintenance of that society, he takes it for granted that man and role are interchangeable, an assumption he maintains even when their ways part.

"Which of us is better dressit?" he asks the clerk.

The reply is "My clothes reflect my function ... you, of necessity ... wear your official livery."⁵

But Lindsay wishes to reflect his function in the essence of his being. Since he believes the function and the man to be one and the same (as one would expect in a true representative of the strong G/G society), he sees no dichotomy between inside and outside. So, in the first of a series of dressings and disrobements, Lindsay takes off his Herald's uniform:

The rags and robes that we do wear
Express the function of our life ...
Ye here I stand and maun contrive
 With this soul body and the brain within him
 To set myself upon one man alive
And turn his purpose and utterly win him

The coat is irrelevant
I will wear it nea further
Till Armstrange be brocht
Intil the King's peace and order.⁶

Obviously, without his clothes he will be the same man, but Lindsay

5. Act I, scene 2, p253/4

6. Act I, scene 2, p254/5

misses the true significance of his Herald's gear. Like the clerk, both his place and his true function are expressed in his clothing. It defines him and the scope of his activity; it places him in the world and gives him and his actions meaning.

He observes "here is one man under it, and remove what's left upon him and there's nothing for ye but nakedness." But incorrectly, he assumes that a naked man, without function, can act in a creative and viable way. Though Lindsay sees the man without his defining clothing to be of little interest except to lover or torturer, he sets himself the task of winning Armstrong "nakedly", "man to man."

CLOTHING

What ultimately, is a man? Word, object or persona can only be defined and valued in relation to one another, in a system of values which reflects what those who are valuing think life is about. This structuring of value is the basis from which one constructs a world picture which gives meaning and allows effective action. The justification for action reveals the underlying ordering and value structure of any particular culture.

Throughout Elizabethan Tragedy, clothing and images of dressing proliferate in an attempt to elaborate on the relationship between man's inner being and the role he plays, the relationship between a man and the external signs which speak him to the world. In Armstrong's Last Goodnight, a running discussion on the meaning and use of clothing is punctuated by scenes in which both Lindsay and Armstrong dress and undress, culminating in the moment where Armstrong's gladdest rags are torn from his body as he dies.

Lindsay infers as he discards his Herald's coat that he has

transcended his role. He wants to act now not as man but, in a sense, as a God, unfettered by function, ties and society, throwing off the clothing that represents them, loose in a Garden of Eden. But he is already bounded both by the society he represents, whose health it is his function to protect, and by the action he has undertaken: to "enscoil" Armstrong in order to ensure this health. As he learns to his cost, it is only as David Lindsay Delamont, the King's Herald, that he can take any effective action.

Even this innocuous buff coat he puts on to meet Armstrong eventually becomes a costume. When he takes off his Herald's coat a second time and gets into these "ordinary" clothes, they become, themselves, a uniform for visiting Armstrong.

At Armstrong's castle these "simple" clothes show up the different functions and underlying value systems of the two heroes. The plain clothes Lindsay donned in preference to his rich Herald's dress are extravagant to Armstrong. Lindsay's dress, even at its simplest, is elegant and expresses his society and its values as well as his place in it.

ARMSTRONG: "Silk. Satin. Velvet. Gown - is it gown?"⁷

Armstrong wears "Buff leather" and his sword, his pride, against Lindsay's is "lainger, braider, heavier ..." Lindsay's sword is a symbol of his status, Armstrong's an extension of his arm, the arm by which the self-made man hacks a world for himself. Lindsay's sword is what he has earned; Armstrong's, the way he earns it.

(Lindsay seems to have a tendency to want to be loved for himself and not his yellow hair. Needs more than his society is giving him. Armstrong, however, who lives in a society where a man's

7. Act I, scene 7, p272

uniqueness is what gives him viability, though he functions best unencumbered by the goods and chattels that speak of his intrinsic value, makes no such claim. He knows without doubt that the accumulation of goods not only speaks of but confirms that inner value. Although one could hardly call Armstrong's world materialistic, it illuminates the close dependency between the individualized, personalized society and material goods.)

Armstrong becomes more than a thorn in society's paw; he becomes Lindsay's own personal challenge, his private prey, through whose capture Lindsay will prove the rightness and excellence of all he believes in and stands for. Maxwell, for example, he would willingly have murdered - but not Armstrong: "To murder and murderer is a'thegither waste and bad waste at that."⁸

From this angle, it is not hard to see that Lindsay is about to ride into incapacitating difficulties. Until now he has never met a conflict between his own intentions and the larger vision. Nor does he have any way of expressing this division, since when he speaks of himself he always implies the larger good. But once he has staked his own worth on a particular ROUTE rather than a specific END, he is bound to come to grief. He has two intentions. As a result of the way he sees himself in the world, they appear to be commensurate, but they are ultimately distinct and, outside the world in which his standing is confirmed, at odds: to secure James and Scotland against England by eliminating Armstrong's threat to the borders and, in the process, to engrandise himself by coercing Armstrong through reason, according to his own principles.

The story of the Gordian Knot encapsulated his confusion:

8. Act I, scene 2, p255

"Why could he not unravel it as a man?" cries Lindsay. But who is "the man?" the unraveller or the one who cuts through? The knot was tied by a God. Although Lindsay emphasizes the virtues of patience, skill and endurance, in the end cutting through the knot implies an acceptance of the limitations of man, the limits of time and insight. It also implies a concentration on ends rather than means. But to Lindsay they appear one and the same. At this point, Lindsay is at one with the timeless world of the integrated society - a cypher more than a man; but when his personal needs diverge from the needs of his society, he cannot see it, for he has no words to speak it.

When Lindsay arrives at Armstrong's castle, he steps into a world where even his most basic assumptions are called into question. He is not even recognized when he arrives. His answer to "who are you?" is, rightly. "I am sent here by the King." (King first, self second) But the response: "What King?" sets the stage for a complete reversal of terms. The most basic precepts that Lindsay takes for granted

"King James of Scotland. What King d'ye think else?"

"King James of Scotland? King James of bloody Lothian. That's the best name he carries here ... There's but as King in Eskdale, my mannie, and he's King John the Armstrong."

Meanings and definitions are totally reversed. King James, at best, is just another tribal leader. That is what "King" means here. The implied equality with Armstrong is exactly what Armstrong assumes is being openly acknowledged at the end of the play, the very reason he goes to meet James, his "brither." Neither the same roles nor the same boundaries are recognized here. In the end, Lindsay only gets heard by virtue of his title and role. He might as well have worn his Herald's outfit!

"I am David Lindsay of the Mount. Ye will hae heard of me,
I guess."
"Ye are the King's Herald."¹⁰

But even the most basic assumptions underlying Lindsay's world have to be explained:

"The King wants to prevent an English conquest of the Kingdom. For what else is he King?"¹¹

To Lindsay, this goes without saying, but Armstrong could undoubtedly give several answers to that question that Lindsay would never dream of! To Lindsay it is obvious: the purpose of the King is to protect the Kingdom: each subject assumes the preservation of the Kingdom to be the highest good. But to Armstrong, the highest goal is to preserve his power: each man he protects increases his own personal value.

Lindsay's "generous" offer to Armstrong of the King's pardon is founded in his assumption that the King's absolute superiority is a fundamental truth.

"... gif ye will render him ane true and leal obedience henceforth, he will put his royal trust in you ... Ane specific offer of Royal privilege."¹²

But it has already been made painfully clear that Armstrong and his people do not even acknowledge the Kingship. All roads here lead to Armstrong. The only way to join Armstrong to the greater whole is to offer him equality, but this is inconceivable since the entire system depends on the assumption that Kingship is supreme. These two worlds are mutually incompatible. Their organisation and underlying value

10. Act I, scene 6, p270

11. Act I, scene 7, p275

12. Act I, scene 7, p276

system are so at odds even the same words express entirely different meanings.

HONOUR

Armstrong gives little consideration to the King. Having just reasserted his power by swearing fealty with Wamphrey and then assisting Stobbs in murdering him, he is flattered by Lindsay's attention and imagines Lindsay to be "heroic" and "honourable" in his own terms: a man who will fight for himself and his own to defend his personal honour. "Wad he kill for ye?" he asks Lindsay's Lady. "Tis an obligation of honour ... David Lindsay is a Herald. He wad comprehend ..."¹³

But Armstrong is wrong. Given half the chance, Lindsay would have passed his Lady on to Maxwell to gain his own ends. Not that he doesn't care for her (we know he craves her confirmation), but Lindsay's "honour" ultimately rests with his successful participation in the unity, enlargement and continuance of the Kingdom even when the achievement of this demands the sacrifice of his own principles and self respect. Lindsay's verifications are tradition and unity; Armstrong identifies himself with a history of personal might. When asked "who won Brannockburn?" he answers, "We did." (The Armstrongs, not the Scots) "Where will reside the protection for our people?" "Here", answers Armstrong.¹⁴

"Honour" has an entirely different meaning to each of these men. To Armstrong, it refers directly to the defence of himself and his own. The Laird IS his people. Without his people, Armstrong has

13. Act II, scene 9, p306

14. Act I, scene 7, p276

no power, so the safety of himself and his followers is his primary concern and he ensures it with his own hand. An offence to his people is an offence against him. It is a matter of honour to avenge it. His ability to defend and secure it is the justification of his position.

Lindsay's honour lies in his commitment to James and what James represents. It is James, chess King, who must be protected. The people give themselves to him and are dispensable in his defence. His power comes from his role: the role gives meaning and validity to the entire structure. For Armstrong, if the parts are injured, the whole is damaged. In Lindsay's world, if the parts are lost in an attempt to protect the whole, they are little missed so long as the system remains intact. Indeed, James' whole intention in this business is to unite Scotland against England, thereby giving more power and validity to his role both in his own country and outside it. He seeks confirmation of his symbolic value by England.

Having known and taught the King since childhood, it is inconceivable that Lindsay should have any awe whatever invested in the person of the King. However, he does take it for granted that the symbolic power of the role is agreed and shared. This assumption of the superiority of the role underlies Lindsay's response to Armstrong's boast that he killed the King's lieutenant:

"So ye slew the King's lieutenant ... What hour or what wee
minute was reft out of the Royal sleep ..."¹⁵

Such insignificance of parts is inconceivable to Armstrong. In his eyes, he has hit the King where it hurts, felled his representative and thus, like the game of conkers, taken some of the power that once

15. Act I, scene 7, p273

belonged to James. To kill one of Armstrong's men would be to diminish Armstrong. His only recourse would be to attempt to regain his honour by taking one, or hopefully more, of his opponent's men.

Lindsay's insistence on Armstrong's insignificance to James is double-edged. He invests the King with an importance he assumes is shared, but it is not. It is obvious Armstrong hardly gives James a second thought. The fact is, Armstrong is more important to James than the King is to him. In Armstrong's domain, James has as little symbolic power as he has actual power. Here, James is a distant figure who, at best, is a nuisance, a snag in the smooth running of their lives. But Armstrong is a thorn in James' side. That is why Lindsay is there! The insult to Armstrong is personal, casting aspersions on his own personal worth by belittling one of the deeds which added to his value.

The second barb is against Lindsay himself and reaches further into the progress of the play. Lindsay invest himself with power and importance through his association with the King. But as he discovers to his cost, his power is limited, and even he, tutor, friend and Herald, can be dispensed with when he treads too near the royal toes. Lindsay takes his own uniqueness for granted. He assumes he is exempt from the pattern he describes so explicitly to Armstrong. But no one is indispensable in a G/G society. Even the King is eventually replaced by another King. The value rests in the role, not the individual inhabiting it.

Lindsay and Armstrong, each in his own way, assumes that he alone can and does transcend the working and symbolism of his own culture. Ironically, each becomes, in fact, not an exception to the "natural laws" but rather the very epitome of them. Subject to the laws and interpretations of their own world, they are unable to

function successfully in the other's. Each world is constructed differently, with different laws and hierarchies of values. Even the words they hold in common contain different inferences and meanings.

Lindsay offers Armstrong the King's pardon (which means little to him) and the Lieutenantship complete with gold collar which, as we subsequently see, Armstrong covets as "booty," under the understanding that he keep to his own borders. He also offers Armstrong sovereignty over lands which Armstrong already claims as his own. The making of boundaries is Lindsay's task, but the man he is making them for depends for his very existence, sustenance and validation on the crossing and destruction of boundaries. Lindsay is offering a defined, specific and subordinate role to a man whose whole justification lies in his being subject to none, with sovereignty over his territory and subjects maintained through his own might. In the integrated society, a grain of mustard seed is a microcosm of life. "Sir David Lindsay is the King's tongue and the King's ear." Armstrong must fashion his world to speak of himself; his validity rests on his ability to do so. Even when he speaks of his own obligations to Maxwell, he emphasizes not his obligations, but his will: "toward Lord Maxwell the Laird has sworn an ancient lealty."¹⁶

Suggesting "ancient lealties" be abandoned and the lowlanders take to agriculture for sustenance, Lindsay is prescribing a complete dismantling of the society's structure. Such a change, if possible, would necessitate a total reversal of the social complex and its underlying value system. Certainly, "There is ever ane sair question when a man sees his ancient life on the brink of complete

16. Act I, scene 7, p276

reversal.¹⁷ Lindsay is saying more than he knows. Were Armstrong to follow his suggestions, which to Lindsay are merely a matter of logical adaptation, his world would change beyond all recognition. But Lindsay, also, is on the brink of reversal: although his social position will remain unchanged, its meaning and all the precepts he takes for granted will be themselves dismantled, his confidence in its perfection, destroyed. Though the two men use the same words and appear to reach agreement and understanding through the assumption that the meaning of the words is shared between them, this very appearance of agreement broadens the gulf between them.

Lindsay compliments himself on his own perceptions: "I've no turnt them at all, Sandy. Johnny Armstrong's purpose remains precisely the same as ever they had been - violent, proud and abominable selfish." True, he has not changed Armstrong, but neither has he come to know him. "Violent, proud and selfish" are subjective judgments made in relation to a specific set of assumed values. "Powerful, confident and self-determined" also describe the same man.

Each man interprets and judges in accordance with his own world view. Where Armstrong sees personal honour at Lindsay's core, Lindsay sees "sweet reason" in Armstrong's heart. McGlass's comment expresses more clearly how Armstrong must appear to the cultivated Scot: "Nothing in his mind but the enjoyment of manalaughter."¹⁸ McGlass makes no effort to understand. He sees that Armstrong's ways are incompatible with the new order. Lindsay, however, convinced that everything can be integrated and staking his own self esteem on his ability to do so and his knowledge of the nature of man, flatters

17. Act I, scene 7, p280

18. Act III, scene 5, p328

Armstrong by assuming that he is basically the same as himself. "I know what's in his mind. He yearns for a practical rational alternative."¹⁹ Anthropomorphism can only go so far. When the lion tamer believes the lion to be a man in a lion's pelt, it becomes inevitable that he will be eaten and the lion destroyed.

Nor could Armstrong ever conceive of a world where one would willingly part with one's "personal honour" for a greater good, nor a time when one's personal power would be contingent upon the safety of a greater whole. Lindsay's kind of "treachery" is inconceivable to Armstrong. This imaginative failure leads to his violent death.

ALL'S WELL - LINDSAY

Overwhelmed by his own cleverness, blinded by the neat fit between himself and his world, Lindsay cannot see the gap between them opening. Nor, at this point, is there any need, for his place and importance are publicly confirmed. Name: title: rank, and he is "admittit upon the instant" for "the King is at all times attentive to the good services of Lord Lyon."

"We must dress ourselves correctly, Sandy. A robe and collar of gold upon us to furnish counsel to the king... we'll attend for a world of political discretion."²⁰

Quick-change artist, Lindsay dons roles as he dons clothes, full of confidence that there is no discrepancy between them, and re-enters the inner sanctum where the rules of the game are set, their value ranked, entirely consistent with his own. The relationship between himself and the society he represents have not yet been openly tested. Lindsay at the Palace, in his Herald's regalia, attendant on

19. Act I, scene 9, p328

20. Act I, scene 10, p188

the King is at the height of his powers, an image of his greatest worth and meaning.

ALL'S WELL - ARMSTRONG

Though Armstrong thinks he is testing Lindsay, his meeting with the Lady is a test to himself. A test he passes admirably. He is at his best unencumbered by the complexities of his society and his responsibility for interpreting it and giving it meaning. When Lindsay disrobes in the first Act, he is attempting to discard the signs that express his value. When Armstrong disrobes, he discards encumbrances to his true worth. For a giver of meaning, the ultimate value is in the uniqueness of his person, unimpeded by the society or its vestments. A "truly heraldic lion" (Lyon), he wins the lady by virtue of his own unique being.

Alone and naked, Armstrong declares his self-evaluation:

"Gif the King himself were here I wad never beg his pardon ... I wad demand he saw me as ane man (compare Lindsay, Act I) ... that he wad accord me recognition thereas and that he wad give me as ane man a 'thing' he could conceive that it were possible I did deserve."²¹

There is no doubt in Armstrong's mind of his own value. He is a man of excellent, unique qualities, the equal to the best of men and deserving of reward by anyone who can ascertain his worth. This is no equivocation: it comes from the absolute clarity of his being. No stammer clouds it. His life is fraught with tension, crossed loyalties and imminent betrayals, but alone, stripped of the clothes that represent the responsibilities of maintaining his position, he is confident of his worth, and his world confirms it. As lover, with only himself to offer, he is at his least defensive, his most confi-

21. Act II, scene 9, p307/8

dent. Lindsay (who voices doubts about himself as lover), in the same way, is most totally himself when he is with the King, as Herald.

At this point we see each man at the culmination of his meaning. Armstrong, naked, with Lindsay's Lady in his arms, unencumbered even by his speech impediment, powerful, unique, and irreplaceable: Lindsay, replete in his Herald's finery, at the head of the King's procession. Two pictures of two ways of defining man and his meaning in relation to the world around him; two totally incompatible worlds. From now on it has to be a downhill struggle.

FEUDS

Feuds are not tradition, but the past alive in the present. Tradition is precedence. It supports actions and definitions by supplying proof of their success in the past. The feud, however, is a continual repetition of the same action which, by definition, can have no resolution and therefore cannot entertain the notion of success. Feuds impose a continued and unending responsibility on present time, an unsleeping past hindering and distorting present action and driving it towards an ineffable destiny.

Wamphrey's spectre haunts the action, an image of accumulating destiny. When Armstrong speaks to Lindsay of Wamphrey being "at peace", he foretells his own end where "peace" will eventually be achieved by the same exact means. Each society performs the same act in the same place, achieving its ultimate ends through treachery.

The individualized society is fraught with double-binds. Although Armstrong appears to extricate himself from his conflicting ties to both Wamphrey and Stobbs, it is only a temporary resolution. His justification barely holds water, for he has publicly gone

against his own word, and the power of the self-made man is inextricably linked with his integrity. Through the progress of the play, this conundrum of divided loyalties grows to enormous proportions.

Armstrong sees in Lindsay's offer of Lieutenantship an opportunity to augment his stature, but his entertainment of Lindsay and the Lady stirs up problems in his own loyalties, wronging Stobbs as Wamphrey "wronged" Meg. Although Stobbs still recognizes feudal boundaries and thus Armstrong's sovereignty, he makes explicit the unanswerable problem of conflicting loyalties in a world where a man's safety and strength depend on personal voluntary alliances. Armstrong's attempt to mitigate the argument by logically demonstrating their unity with the King against the English is an indication both of the influence of Lindsay and of the hedging necessary when the lines of loyalty stretch beyond individual control. Thus he ends up by proving that joining with James will give justification to their raids on the English border. Not exactly what King James had in mind!

Armstrong sees the Lieutenantship as both a recognition of his worth and a license for his actions from a larger unit, but he cannot grasp the way this unit functions. It is Stobbs who gleams that the Lieutenantship signifies not so much grandeur as obedience. Where Armstrong sees gold, Stobbs sees the collar, an indication that Armstrong has had less cause to worry about obligations to others than Stobbs has.

Stobbs is demanding confirmation of their alliance. Getting Armstrong's agreement that English aggression could be justly repaid "in defence of the realm", he organizes a plan that will both test Armstrong's faith and repay his own slights: the burning of Sims' house. Armstrong, again, is torn between opposing ties of

honour; loyalty to Stobbs, recognition of bonds to Sims, and his word to Lindsay. "Can we call it consonant ... with honour?"

In a low g/g society, where values and morality stem from the individual, it goes without saying that others are also in competition for augmentation of their own power and recognition of their own unique value. Since there are few recognised boundaries beyond what a man makes, and no shared morality except what the individual forges, distinctions easily become blurred. Armstrong is in an untenable situation. Either way, he is damned. All possible actions are both justifiable and unjustifiable in his own terms.

STOBBS: "But for the ancient friendship alone I hae sparit your life ... ye has but ae choice ... ride wi the Eliots, or die like a Johnstone ... ye ca' this matter delicate, delicate as the hale reputation of your name ..." ²²

How can he maintain his worth? What are his obligations? Where does honour lie? Justification through honour is no longer viable. The only possible course of action is to extricate himself from the net of personal alliances and declare himself beyond the accepted forms of morality. Armstrong pulls out all the plugs.

On hearing Maxwell is making difficulties over his Lieutenantship, Armstrong naturally assumes that Maxwell is personally jealous. No other explanation occurs to him. Everything comes back to Armstrong. He is both effect and cause; this only serves to augment his own sense of worth.

"I repudiate Lord Maxwell and am his man nae langer. The decision of my conduct for peace or for war, belongs to me and to none other." ²³

Armstrong thus places himself beyond the alliances of men. Ironical-

22. Act I, scene 4, p316

23. Act II, scene 15, p319

ly, this is what Lindsay originally had in mind: to extricate Armstrong from his ancient fealties; then deal with him directly. However, the context is wrong. Armstrong cannot now be dealt with. He has exaggerated his former position by freeing himself from all obligations. He is beyond morality. From now on morality will stem from him alone.

Even then, some external confirmation is necessary. True, Armstrong's social context has always placed right on the side of might and given special value to the man who rises above the others and manages to imprint his own values on the world around him. But this was to some extent mitigated - and eventually strangled - by the league of personal alliances necessary for survival. To take this one step further and declare oneself, so to speak, beyond society, needs some external connection if it is to function this side of sanity. The perfect confirmation is awaiting Armstrong in his own forest.

THE EVANGELIST

The Evangelist is an anomaly. A Scot who lived in Germany totting a banned Bible written in English as he walks through Scotland, he officially belongs nowhere, defies definition. Since he speaks against Armstrong, Armstrong gains nothing from protecting him. In Armstrong's world, ambiguities are ironed out by taking immediate action and justifying it later. His solution to this confusion of boundaries and definitions is to eliminate it. Lindsay, however, priding himself on his ability to fit everything into an integrated whole by verbal slight of hand, buys the book, thereby bending the situation into a shape just different enough to change the basis on which judgement might be taken and reclassifying its

former owner.

To Lindsay this is an unimportant incident, an innocuous little man he has saved by his excellent wit. Lindsay's pride in his ability to use everything as fodder for his talent for manipulation prevents him from being able to recognize the Evangelist as an active anomaly, a harbinger of the winds of change. His lack of "gravity" leads to complications of such magnitude that it causes McGlass' death and his own reversal. Eventually, Armstrong will give the Evangelist both group and role, augmenting his own power and status and giving the Evangelist a platform for action and effect.

The Evangelist offers the perfect cosmological justification in a personalized world. Where the integrated society assumes a social pattern inherited from Heaven and reinforced through tradition, the individualized society finds its spiritual justification in an internalized God, the God living within the individual and standing in wait to give him ultimate confirmation. A cosmic conscience. Institutions are discredited. "To think of it", to succeed, gives "righteousness." As both societies agree, had Wamphrey killed Armstrong, it would be Wamphrey who would be Lieutenant.

Eventually, the church-as-conscience runs into the inevitable conflicts of loyalty endemic in the individualized society. Principles vs. needs, ideals vs. success, loyalty vs. loyalty, inside vs. outside; conflicts arise which demand a choice between equally evaluated elements. So long as the implications remain unspoken, self-justification returns to the internalized, unwitnessed deity. McGlass makes the choice explicit and public:

"The cause of her distraction is John Armstrong, that did kill her man. And ye hae sanctifyit that murderer in all verity with the words of the gospel? Whilk of these two penitents of yours will ye accept or reject? Ye cannot credit the baith of them? They canna baith be guest at the same Christian marriage table .. whaur is conscience and humanity, master-with this tormentit lassie, or with Gilnockie and his brand? Whaur is your conscience-whaur is Christ, this minute!" 24

Like Armstrong, the Evangelist finds himself in an untenable position. He is caught between the ideals of his religion, its implicit values, and the alliance he made in order to build a church where this creed can become active and viable. Unable to choose between personal and public, spiritual and material, he clears his anomalous position by destroying his critic, thus placing himself, both in his own eyes and those of others, in a conventional relationship with God and society. Damned.

"Here, Satan, here - ... The flesh prevails ever. The Lord hath hid his face ... cover me, cover me frae the abundant wrath of God - "25

EMPEROR JOHNNY

Theoretically, James of Scotland represents a higher sovereignty and confirmation, but as Stobbs ascertains, this would involve obedience. Armstrong reaches beyond the King. To Lindsay it seems a reversal of extraordinary cunning and political acumen. Well it might be, but there has been no essential change in Armstrong's attitude. In times of stress, one reverts to the limits of the system for confirmation of one's viability and a platform for action. It is a "natural law" in Armstrong's world that the largest man sets the laws and limits. His justification now extends to God. With the

24. Act III, scene 8, p335

25. Act III, scene 8, p335

consecration of his sword, Armstrong receives cosmic confirmation of his sovereignty.

"I am nobody's man but God's ... whichever direction can ensure me the best wealth and food for my people ..." 26

He has found a higher power than himself that will condone him without demanding subservience. His view has not changed, only his scope.

ARMSTRONG: Lieutenant. The man who hauls me place. As the place of his master ... To haul the king's place craves me honour of equality. Tell the King his Lieutenant is Armstrong and as his Lieutenant I demand me absolute latitude and discretion for my governance of this territory. 27

"... Johnstone of Wamphrey - I do desire reversal of that traitor's property and lands. He did conspire against my life. I am me King's officer. That's treason. If the lands are no granted me, ye can tell the King I will grip them." 28

Armstrong does seem to have got hold of the wrong end of the stick. Lieutenant does not equal King. Nor is he in any position to make demands. But in his own terms, he has solved his problems by placing his own will and its divine confirmation above all others, thereby allowing himself to serve both the King and Stobbe without explanation. However, he is incapacitated by his inability to see in any terms other than his own. The King is, after all, not an independent tribal leader, but the representative of a large, integrated society which depends on the enactment of the obligations it imposes. The point to the homogeneous society is that nothing is absolute except the society. To accept the Lieutenantship as a means of aggrandizing himself without accepting the obligations it represents is a contra-

26. Act VII, scene 5, p333

27. Act II, scene 15, p319

28. Act II, scene 16, p319/20

diction in terms. Since Armstrong's absolute power is only valid to himself, and since he cannot find the terms by which to identify the King either as a viable opponent or master, Armstrong cannot take any action which will succeed in confirming his own position. Only he sings his own praises. But he sings loudly.

BALLAD: ... Laird of Glinnockie
He aye wad save his country dear
Frae the Englishman
Nane are sae bauld
While Johnny doth ride on the border side
Nane of them daur come near his hault!²⁹

LADY: Riever and rebel he was before
But now ane starker style outsprings
He is ane Emperour complete
Betwixt two petty Kings.

LINDSAY: Ane Emperour. Hardly that, I think.

LADY: In his ain een he is ane Emperour.³⁰

KING DAVID

Blindness to the fundamental precepts of another world view is not limited to tribal leaders and members of individualized societies. Although he is warned continually by McGlass, who may not understand Armstrong, but understands the threat he poses, and has it spelled out for him by his Lady, Lindsay is unable (even unwilling) to credit Armstrong with any intrinsic value. He even credits himself with the change in Armstrong:

"It is evident that companionship with the King's maker has to this extent brocht forth fruit ..."³¹

Yes, the intervention of Lindsay did eventually bring Armstrong to

29. Act II, scene 16, p321

30. Act III, scene 1, p322

31. Act II, scene 1, p322

augment himself beyond consequence. This is surely Lindsay's "fruit". If the poet's work is to make the implicit explicit, Lindsay is correct: Armstrong's sense of himself has now become explicit, manifest in all its glory and contradictions. But ...

"John of Gilnockie, with nae suzrain to control him, wad be ane honest man to deal with, wad he no? For his treacheries derive frae the occult procurations of dark men that movit ahint of him and they're gane."³²

Obviously, Lindsay means "nae suzrain" EXCEPT JAMES. But until Lindsay's arrival, Armstrong's "treacheries" were not necessarily treacheries but the sincere enactment of his role and obligations within the terms of the world he lives in. Now, pressed from all sides, Armstrong declares "nae suzrain" and attempts to rise above them.

"I intend to bring Armstrong to a de facto truce with Lairds beyond the border ... I ken very weel what is in John Armstrong's mind ... the man desires - he yearns for - for ane practical rational alternative ... he is ane potential magnificent ruler of his people."³³

Lindsay's interpretation of Armstrong's state of mind borders on the bizarre. At the moment, Armstrong is yearning for recognition of his absolute sovereignty! But Lindsay is so bounded by his own need to prove himself and his concept of man correct, he can neither credit Armstrong for what he is nor listen to the insights of others. This surreptitious separation between Lindsay and his purpose, or rather the confusion between the safety of Scotland and the proof of his own principles, is the result, of course, of his contact with Armstrong. Subtle ambition, dormant when the man was at one with his role, has now awakened, separating Lindsay, "the man", from "the King's repre-

32. Act III, scene 1, p324

33. Act III, scene 5, p328

mentative." Lindsay's belief that they are still one and the same may hold him together, but it also prevents him from taking effective action until it is too late.

Lindsay clings to the belief that everyone, given the chance, would choose to be him. His unquestioning confidence in his own motive and behaviour pushes him to the extremes of his own world, as Armstrong is pushed to his. The King refuses to see Lindsay. The lesson is there: the whole is greater than its part and can only hold together when the wills and actions of ALL are reinforcing it and SEEN to be doing so; Lindsay is reminded that he - even he - is expendable. But Lindsay, so wrapt in the machinations of his own superior plan hears neither Armstrong nor the King. The unity of individual and role is so fundamental to Lindsay that he cannot see that his own need to prove his abilities has stretched beyond his task. McGlass warns him that he is moving beyond the accepted borders: "Your circuit is over-large - you'd do better serving the king of England." But Lindsay experiences no distinction between his ambition and his role. He assumes that even his most personal plans and attachments will eventually be for the good of the society. It follows by definition that, like Caesar's wife, he must be beyond suspicion.

LADY: Besides, ye will be rebel; ye will be against your King for this ...

LINDSAY: Rebel? I am already traitor, it wad seem ...³⁴

He cannot consider himself a rebel, despite the fact that he has gone against the King's instructions. Like Armstrong, he calls on his inner self. He knows his ultimate aim is - must be - the unity of the kingdom. He looks like a rebel, but "really" he is the most

34. Act III, scene 5, p328

devoted of followers. Ironically, however, he goes on to speak of James as if the king were his subject.

"I am about to set an absolute trust upon King James. This is an test for him, an precise temptation: he kens my value, gif he would bethink him: let him see my purposes, and let him see the purposes of Lord Maxwell ... and mak an clear choice, betwixt them ...³⁵

Unfortunately, Lindsay is no longer James' tutor, but his Herald. In the natural run of things, it is not for the King to second-guess Lindsay, but for Lindsay to come to heel. Until now, his worth was denoted by his position; there was no distinction. Now, Lindsay is staking his personal worth on his actions, although the agreed stake is not his personal value but the well-being of the nation. This speech could almost have been made by Armstrong himself.

"Gif he be at least an man, he will discern what David Lindsay means, and there will be nae mair talk of rebel or traitor. But gif he prefer to remain forever the schoolboy that he has been he will put himself for ever outwish all hope of stringent kingly government. It is an act of faith to trust him."³⁶

Who does he think he is? Is the test of manhood to trust on faith? The relationships have been entirely reversed. Like Armstrong, Lindsay is demanding total acceptance of his own unique value, even prophesying the future on the basis of the King's ability to recognize his inner worth! Of course, he is in no position to do this. The test of his value is in his usefulness to the state, not in his own eye, but the eyes of others. He may be the King's "tongue and ears" but, ultimately, he is only his messenger.

"England craves for the execution of Gilnockie," says Mc-

35. Act III, scene 5, p329

36. Act III, scene 5, p329

Glass, "We have to choose but to give it him." 37

"Wad ye make your name ane by word for tyranny and coercion?" retorts Lindsay. But is there any choice? Either way, Lindsay is trapped. All routes lead to treachery either against himself or against Scotland.

Lindsay's inability to credit Armstrong and what he represents, coupled with his inability to recognize the growing gap between the function of his role and his personal ambition prevents him from taking effective action and leads ultimately to the death of McGlass:

"Ye did take pride in your recognition of the fallibility of men. Recognize your ain ... ye can never accept the gravity of ane other man's violence ... For you yourself has never been grave in the hale of your life! ... you should have heard me at the first - your rationality and practicality has broke itself to pieces, because ye wad never muster the needful gravity, to gar it stand as strang as Gilnockie's fury ... There is naething for you now but to match that same fury and with reason and intelligence, see that this time you will win ..."

... aye, man, ye'll win and be damned ... will you reverse your life for me?"³⁸

What is a man? David Lindsay is thrown back to his original question and his place in the scheme of things. His responsibility to the ends he was sent to accomplish means he must abandon the means on which he had staked the value of his person. Unrecognizable, he returns to Court, forces himself on James, and dons his Herald's dress. He cannot stand alone. He needs the full weight of his society: position, place and role. To cut the knot means to admit fallibility. This admission is an intense defeat. It denies everything Lindsay believed valuable in mankind and in himself.

37. Act III, scene 1, p324

38. Act III, scene 6, p336/7

I did swear a greet aith
I wad wear this coat nae further
Till Armstrong be brocht
Intil the King's peace and order etc

We are but back whaur we began
A like coat had on the Greekish Emperour
When he rase up his brand like a butcher's cleaver:
There was the knot and he did cut it,
An deed of gravity. Who daur dispute it?³⁹

We may well be back where we began, but the context has entirely altered. Lindsay has put aside the ideals and principles that gave his life meaning in order to carry out his commitments to Scotland. His "inner worth", which he once took for granted and then put on the line, is denied in confirmation of the over-riding importance of the nation. Before, there was no differentiation: the group spoke of him as he spoke for the rightness and unity of the group. Now, Lindsay gives himself up for the sake of the whole, but a whole whose perfection he can no longer believe in. His assumptions about himself and his relationship to his world are shattered. The actions he takes, diametrically opposed to all the convictions he held self evident and most dear. Lindsay plays upon Armstrong until he leads him in open deception to a violent death: the same actions, the same end, as Armstrong practised on Wamphrey.

His mission is accomplished at the price of his own sense of worth, his self-respect and his belief in the supreme rightness of his world. Lindsay, who prided himself on his diplomacy and his ability to manipulate the word while retaining his integrity, knowingly lies and distorts in the service of a predetermined end. This time, he does not give the Armstrongs the King's letter to read, but reads it himself, subtly adjusting the text to offer Armstrong con-

39. Act III, scene 12, p340

firmation of his own self-esteem. Thus "subject" becomes "weal-belovit" and "fraternal".

"Brother" has strong symbolic implications for Armstrong. "Brotherly ties are those of blood, loyalty and equality." "Fraternal" confirms to him that his worth has been recognised, that he has been offered the place he "deservit" in a scheme of things reaching far beyond his own territory.

"Fraternal ... he calls me his brother ... the King's fraternal." Armstrong has always maintained that he was the King's equal. At long last, he has been "accrodit recognition ... as ane man." Confident that he is to receive what he "deservit", Armstrong goes to his death.

"It is necessair this matter should with earnest deliberation be imbracit. It is necessair, ane good preclair appearance: as in dress and plumage ... The King has called me brither! My gaudiest garments, ilk ane of them, a' the claiiths of gawd and siller, silk apparel, satin, ilk ane I has grippit in time past out of England. Fetch 'em here ... Lindsay Delamont: tak tent: ye see Gilnockie puttin on his raiment. It is the ceremony: John Armstrong's pride and state ... ane coat of glory for ane glorious King to hauld the hand of his brither."⁴⁰

In child-like innocence, Armstrong rushes to his "brither", dressed for the occasion so that outwardly he might manifest his inward self. Ironically, these symbols of his worth and sovereignty have been gained by the very activities the King intends to stop by his execution. ("ye have embroiliet and embranglit us with England the common enemy: and by dint of malignant factions ye have a'but split the realm!"⁴¹ And it is the Warden of England's hat Armstrong wears before the King.) Dressed in the most glorious rage he has

40. Act III, scene 12/13, p341/2

41. Act III, scene 14, p347

collected on his raids, the finest tributes to his unique value, Armstrong is complete. Inner and outer man commensurate, he becomes a living symbol of himself.

The murder of Wamphrey haunts Armstrong at every turn: through the Scottish Court, turning James against him and Lindsay; howled in the air by women; increasing in power until it takes on the weight and timelessness of Destiny, grinding steadily onward until it is reincarnated in Armstrong's execution. Its echo is heard as Armstrong, full of confidence, lays down his arms at the King's tent: "We are here upon ain trust."⁴²

Armstrong has made himself complete to meet the King: he expects James, also, to be a recognizable symbol of his power and worth. But James is not Armstrong's equal in any sense. Armstrong is a man; James, a boy. Beyond his position, James has little personal worth. Only in the arms of his society is his power greater than Armstrong's. Armstrong can never meet James "man to man". When he meets James, he meets not a man but a whole, hostile world. "Our word in this place is sufficient. Hang him up."⁴³

"Delamont. The King's letter. The King's honour. The Royal Seal." What do they mean? What can they stand for? Lindsay stands dishonoured, traitor to himself ... and to Armstrong. Like Armstrong with Wamphrey, he lead a man who followed him in good faith to his death, leaving the execution of the final act to another. For Lindsay it is a reversal of all he believed in, but his dishonour is private. No honour is lost publicly in this world when an individual is sacrificed for the public good.

42. Act III, scene 14, p345

43. Act III, scene 14, p347

Alone in a world that gives no credence to his qualities, nor value to his existence, Armstrong, like Lindsay, sees himself and his world in the expansive perspective of time.

To seek hot water beneath could ice
Surely it is one great follie
I ha'e socht grace at graceless face
And there is non for my men and me

But I had wist ere I cam frae hame
How thou unkind wadst be to me
I had keepit the border side
In spite of all thy men and thee - 44

The action comes full circle. Armstrong is tied to the same tree on which he executed Wamphray. Despite their incompatible differences, their conflicting structures, value systems and focus, at this point, the two worlds merge. Through the same pattern of treachery each willingly sacrifices its ideals to eliminate a man who endangers those ideals. At this tree there is no difference between Lindsay's world and Armstrong's except for the justification for the act. Armstrong's, his own power and safety; Lindsay's, the power and safety of the realm. If a threat to the structure appears, each will stretch or temporarily dispense with its most treasured principles in order to eliminate it. At this tree, the differences between them are negligible.

"Gilnockie bids ye welcome. It's Gilnockie's land; it's no the King's, mind that. Gilnockie's land and God's." 45

Armstrong's insistence on equality threatens the superiority of the whole. In an effort to reduce his stature, "they rip his fine clothes off him..." But Armstrong continues to sing his song. The full impact of this is only really possible on stage. The reduction

44. Act III, scene 14, p347/8

45. Act III, scene 14, p346

of Armstrong's figure as his clothes are ripped off combines with his vigorous singing to give an audio-visual picture - a dramatic image - of the culmination of his meaning. The clothes are Armstrong's confirmation of his value, symbols of his innocence, signifiers of his power, and yet they are not essential. Even without his clothes, Armstrong gains stature as he continues his song in the face of death.

"For God's sake, let me finish my song! I am one gentleman of land and lineage and an Armstrong for ever has been the protection of this realm!"⁴⁶

Too late Armstrong grasps the importance of tradition! Still, the "realm" he speaks of is not the same "realm" over which James claims sovereignty. Armstrong is murdered in the midst of his song, his ballad, his life. When Armstrong dies, a whole world dies with him. He has become the representative of a way of ordering reality, of giving value to experience, of giving man meaning. It is inherent in a system that sees life through the eyes of the individual that the individual world formed by each person will end at his death, for no two can be the same. But with Armstrong, the loss is greater. It is not James, but the society he represents that has won. The way of ordering and evaluating life that gave rise to Armstrong dies with him.

"Will ye no look what the man was wearing? Gif we wer to set one crown upon the carl, he wad be nae less splendid than ourself."⁴⁷

In contrast to Armstrong's ignominious death and his strangled song, his fine clothes appear an act of insolence. But his dress was not simply a sign of arrogance; it was also truthful. He

46. Act III, scene 14, p348

47. Act III, scene 15, p348

was the symbol of his society, as James is of his. Indeed, it is only the crown that gives James, himself, his power. Armstrong, unique and energetic, innocent yet powerful, represents a way of ordering and relating to experience which has been cut off before its time not by a "better man" but by a "new" order, a larger, homogeneous entity which absorbs all around it and keeps secure by the regulation of its parts in service to its perpetuity. "Man to man", Armstrong' was anyone's equal.

While the man who revelled in his spoils and dressed himself in the finest of them to make his true worth visible to the world stands naked at his death still proclaiming his intrinsic, unique worth, Lindsay, so sure of the truth of a man beneath his clothes, stands in his Herald's finery, stripped of the principles and preconceptions on which his self-respect and value was based. What he set out to do he accomplished. But his pride and confidence in the perfection of both himself and his society are gone. Through his contact with Armstrong, Lindsay lost faith in the underlying principles on which his world worked, their permanence and their rightness in the annals of time. With these, he lost confidence in his irreductable nature and his place in the great scheme of things.

"The man is dead, there will be nae war with England; this year. There will be but small turbulence upon the Border; this year. And what we hae done is no likely to be forgotten; this year, the next year, and many year after that. Sire, you are King of Scotland."⁴⁸

Supported by the long-lived historical memory of a G/G society, linked closely as it was to England where the tradition was well woven into the fabric of its people's consciousness, Lindsay remains in the memory of time. The survival of this world depended

48. Act III, scene 18, p349

on destroying the irreplaceable: Armstrong, his kind and his world, struck from time and memory.

Here is the demise of the individualized society under the expansion of its boundaries. As the network of voluntary dependencies and alliances becomes forced to expand beyond the scope an individual can control, the necessities of expansion demand interaction with societies whose constructs are different, even antithetical, and the individualized society disintegrates under the weight of agreements whose demands it cannot fulfil and whose meanings it cannot understand. Since the comprehensive "state", the whole that is greater than the sum of its parts, can incorporate differing elements and absorb anomaly in its concentration on its own growth, the individual and the organization of experience which celebrates his uniqueness is ultimately dispensable. In the end, any society will sacrifice its ideals for expediency. "Man to man" or in the name of the corporation. The G/O society, being larger than the individual and being the centre of meaning, finds no contradictions in swallowing up other worlds, and even its own members, in order to ensure its own continuance and validity.

"That the tree upon which he was hanged spread neither leaf nor blossom - Nor bloom of fruit nor sap within its branches - Free this time forth and for evermore. It did fall and it did wither As one dry exemplar to the world ... Remember: King James the Fifth, though but seventeen years of age, did become one adult man, and learnt to rule his kingdom. He had been well instructed in the necessities of state by that poet that was his tutor."⁴⁹

David Rudkin's Sons of Light¹. is an example of a modern work entirely dependant on a working concept of integration. Integration, not only as a viable alternative but as a moral imperative, informs and forms the action and eventually becomes manifest in the action itself.

The basic story is a formula adventure where an outsider arrives on a strange island inhabited by monsters and cleanses it. Here, the "monsters" are repressive social structures, the creation, possession and confirmation of a powerful individual "benefactor".

THE PLOT

Pastor Bengry and his sons, the twins Michael and Samuel and their elder brother John, arrive on the island of Skaranay where Bengry is to be pastor to the small community of islanders. The islanders appear a terse throw-back to 17th century puritanism. Their religion is founded, however, on fear (the Sunday when their children were drowned) and directed by the whims of an unseen benefactor, Sir Wendell Bain, who, through his renovation of the island, made it possible for them to live there.

Also beholden to Sir Wendell Bain is the scientist Nebewold, who, unbeknownst to the islanders, rules a world of the damned in the bowels of the island, conducting "scientific" experiments in which he reduces the enslaved workers to working machines by eliminating from them all personal will, need and response except that necessary to continue working the mine. Nebewold also rules by fear, employing

1. Text quotations: Rudkin, David, The Sons of Light. Eyre Methuen, London 1982

the sinister Molot to punish and kill with pornographic violence. Violence and pornography, it is suggested, are the emotional outlets of repression.

The internal link between these two worlds is the titular "King of Light". On the island, he is the crippled mason, Manatond, rejecting father of schizophrenic Child Manatond. On hypnotic suggestion from Nebewold - the cry of the fog horn - he rises and descends into his crippled kingdom to be "worshipped" by the soldiers.

Pastor Bengry and his sons bring this island, barren of heart, spirit, and nature, to life. Informed by an assumption of an integrated cosmos where both Man and nature are valued by the fact of creation and confirmed by the patterns of Biblical tradition, the Bengrys' drive for knowledge, relationship and inclusion dislodges the exclusive, repressive barriers of the island.

It is a simple story of death and resurrection. The three part construction - THE DESCENT, THE PIT, SURRECTION - emphasises the mythic form of action implying its movement through cosmic space. The complexity lies in the inter-weaving of the various interactive strands, a binding that takes place on the verticle, rather than the horizontal plane.

Both the events and structure of the play are informed by the necessity of an interactive whole and move inexorably towards integration. Both are dependant on a vision of a universe where each element affects both other parts and a larger inclusive whole which, in turn, both reflects its parts and is affected by them. Change in any part affects all. The health, well being, and integrity of the whole can be read either way, at any level.

STRUCTURE

The movement from disintegration to integration through which the individuals, the social context, and the island proceed is both the subject and the process of the action creating one, of many, reflective levels.

At first glance, the play appears to consist of a number of disassociated scenes. There seems no single character nor linear plot to connect them. They are, however, united through a single action; the process from disintegration to integration binds them and gives them significance. The story becomes coherent and significant as the various strands are pulled into the central process: the transformation of the island. This construction encourages the audience's active participation. Engaged in actively integrating the various elements, the audience is encouraged to undergo the experience of integration for itself.

The construction of the role of central character follows the same logic. The position is literally passed from one character to another until the process is complete. At the beginning, Bengry has the central role. He sets the situation and the terms of its elaboration. After the crisis of Communion, Bengry loses his pastorship and the central focus is passed to Sam and Michael and, through effective instigation by the family, to Stephen. After the death of Sam and Michael, John both inherits from his brothers and receives actively from Stephen the obligation of central character and completes the action.

The "role", so to speak, of "hero", is ascribed rather than earned, handed down from one character to another. The informing spirit and goal that give the role purpose and significance are

constant. Consequently, the focus of the play is shifted from the character and personality of the person to the direction and significance of the task. Such a construction is dependent on a working concept of integration. It would, arguably, be inconceivable in a context informed by the sanctity of the individual and dependent on the assumption that each human story is unique and significant by dint of that uniqueness. The very suggestion that route and role might take precedence over individuality would be sacrilege. Here, however, once the direction is set, each individual, in his own way, forges a section of the path until the action is complete. Significance and worth is gained and evaluated through participation and response to the informing action.

The "handing down" of the role of central, initiating character, especially within the family, serves a variety of functions. It helps define the Bengrys as a tiny, integrated world where each individual plays his part within the whole. Each member feeds his experience and knowledge back into the whole, extending its progress. Each carries with him the purpose and responsibility of the whole. However, this is not merely a family affair. This structural elaboration of inter-active integration also presents an active, physical dramatization of the themes of "influence" and "inheritance." Implicit in this construct is the assumption that human life is a social, inter-active, inter-dependent process, in overt contrast to the precepts of individualism.

The Bengrys bring to the island a cosmological reality structure. Simply by living according to its tenets, they come into immutable confrontation with the island and islanders. Stephen and Child Manatond, transformed and activated, extend the Bengry family, suggesting "the family of Man". Child Manatond becomes "little

sister", and Stephen's sharing of his journey provides the final impetus for John's descent. John's action is neither instigated by nor definitive of his personal uniqueness. It is a necessary consummation of both his own personal destiny and the over-all inclusive action instigated by his father. (The necessities of Group and Grid).

The construction offers both an image and an experience of inheritance and influence in action. The condensation of a single action handed down over generations also implies an extension of the same process, a long-term goal made viable by the cumulative knowledge, experience and action of those who partake in it. This concept is central to the structure and image of the play.

The sense of extended time and the development of change through influence and inheritance express an integrated world view. They assume a time span and significance beyond the immediacy of individual life and consciousness. Attachment is directed away from personal identification toward the emotional and moral necessities of the process of integration and change. The concept is reinforced by the perspective through which we experience the action. The dissociative structure conscientiously prevents identification of the audience with a single individual and focuses their attention on the development of the action and on the island as a whole.

THE ISLAND: MICROCOSMS AND MACROCOSMS. THE IMAGE OF INTEGRATION

Song of Light is the story of an island. The island stands as central focus in a series of microcosms and macrocosms, each inter-relating with and reflecting the others. Itself, a manifestation of an integrated world view.

The island itself has two modes. As host for human habita-

tion, it houses two distorted, dissociated groups - the islanders and the Pit - separate and ignorant of each other, both are distorted mockeries of human potential. Although blind to each other's existence, they are intrinsically, though secretly, dependent on each other and housed in the same body. Crippled by fragmentation, they are barren.

As a natural phenomenon, the island exhibits the same characteristics: an apparently harmonious piece of land, it is comprised of physical elements unnaturally formed, battling against each other.

The various strata of each should lie, atop each other. But here. Here. Flagstone; lava; conglomerate. Millstone, andesite, jet schist, ash; I find beside each other, dislocated, each appearing at the surface, side by side. Cause? the peculiar convulsion of the island's making. Deep shock since.²

It too is barren; bereft of fauna. The island is a world divided against itself, ignorant of itself and its parts. Its separate elements fortified against contact and change are physically and spiritually barren.

The smallest unit is the individual. Child Manatond is also a body divided against itself. Like the island, she is inhabited by disconnected factions who struggle for her possession. Child Manatond is the barometer, the most immediate contact through which an audience can read the process of the action. Her progress from schizophrenia to integrated self-hood is synonymous with the process of the island.

The diagnosis of schizophrenia is not at issue here. What is important are the terms by which it functions in the context of the play. There are many approaches available. A simple division

2. Part I, Act II, p27

between "healthy" and "ill" with accompanying moral and ethical components is not unusual. One might delineate the characteristics of the disorder, perhaps seeking to elicit sympathy, if not identification, with the victim. Another possibility would be the Laingian dialectic - what is madness? involving socio/political associations. Child Manatond, however, is not treated as a vehicle for discussion of madness and related issues. Her "illness" is not defined or delineated. The crisis is not diagnostic. Its function is to furnish an image and an experience of a single body oppressed by the conflicts of isolated, demanding factions to the point where it loses definition, form and autonomy. Child Manatond's state is a physical representation of the status quo. Her "state of mind", although personal to her, reflects the state of the island and, by implication mankind.

Although one might have one's own ideas about schizophrenia and about what form society should take, it is difficult to argue that Child Manatond is best off as she is. By any standards, her helplessness and her marginalisation by the community is shocking and distressful. The viewer wills her to health, a resolution of the harsh voices through their integration into a healthy, active, autonomous individual. Rudkin sets his fundamental terms through an active, personal image which spans the reality systems of both individualism and integration. Through Child Manatond, a dichotomy is established between crippling dis-association and wholeness which sets the moral desirability of integration.

This moral and emotional context informs the action. By association, it is transferred to the social/political body and by implication to the universal body of which the social and individual are small, but essential parts. Thus, to assert that war - civil,

national or personal - disunity, discrimination, exclusion of the Other, or the debilitation of their significance in the ultimate pattern, were a "natural" state of affairs, would be to assert that the "natural" state of the individual is schizophrenia, where many selves war in the same body.

SENGRY: Is none to try, then, to make poor Legion whole?
SISTER D: Whole? Not all are called, Pastor, to be what ye term 'whole'. 'Whole', only them as He Above will have be whole.³

The single, healthy body demands an integrity of selves working together towards the healthy whole. This image and its moral imperative inform the basic precept of the play, personal, social and universal.

"My name is Legion, for I am many"

The action proceeds through a series of microcosms and macrocosms through which it gains emotional and moral significance. They reach from the individual outwards implying an integrated vision where the life of the smallest part is interactive with, reflective of and draws significance from the whole. They can be read in any direction. Child Manatond's experience mirrors the progress of the island. The two modes of the island's existence reflect both each other and her. Simultaneously, they imply, through this system of reflections, a larger whole of which they, too, are parts and of which they stand as reflective example: a metaphysical order.

The religious calling of Pastor Bengry justifies the Biblical-associative language, the very sound of which suggests an established, metaphysical vision. These intimations are supported by the Biblical examples Bengry uses to clarify and give meaning to immedi-

3. Part I, Act II, p29

ate events.

The action of the play is the integration of the island. Both the whole and its parts emerge through death into life as a result of the integrating force of the Bengrya.

THE PERSONALIZED WORLD

Both communities on the island are dependent on Sir Wendell Bain. They are his constructs. The direct consequence of his power and wealth, they are physical proof of his success and significance and ensure its continuance. They are the under-side, the hapless consequences of the man-centred, individualist world view: the by-product of the exemplary individual success story. Having attained enough wealth and power, Bain has projected his personal perspective and morality on others creating small "universes" of his own whose sustenance and significance depend on him and which refer, ultimately, to himself.

From the individualist viewpoint, here indeed is a man who has achieved acknowledgement and success and is therefore justified in his projection of his will on others. Our view, however, is from the underside, from the position of those whose validity and worth are dependent on him, since their "uniqueness" proved no match for his. They are the inhabitants of a strong Grid reality. Their self-defining reference is Sir Wendell Bain. Their concept of the world and self - the islanders overtly, the soldiers unknowingly - are contrived to facilitate the interests and wealth of Sir Wendell. The island, thus, can be seen as the materialised product of individualism. The powerful individual is protected from criticism by the justification of science and the manipulation of religious dogma morally impoverished by adherence to the letter without the spirit.

On Skaranay, Man has replaced God. Sir Wendell is the Creator and the source of morality, the setter of limits, the ultimate significance. The islanders, keeper of his spirit, are barren and motivated entirely by fear and wrath. The soldiers, the physical consequence and producers of his wealth and power, de-humanized slaves bound by the false ideals constructed to compel their work under the justification of science, Man's creation and source of his power.

The demeanour and language of the islanders gives the impression of a Puritan sect defined by Group and informed by metaphysical commitment. However, they are soon revealed to have replaced God with Sir Wendell Bain who, after all, can and does give direct orders! Their value and worth is assessed in relation to Sir Wendell. They need his permission for any change, even in their worship. His attention confirms them, defines them and gives them validity. Despite their appearance of high Group, they are a high Grid society unified and defined through fear and obligation. Their 'group' status is not enriched by the sanctity of Group, but a mask covering their obligatory status with a modicum of honour.

Their Group is a negative asset. Their presence and dependence augments Sir Wendell Bain. The hapless consequence and proof of individual power, they are a representation of the many whose individual value is usurped to enlarge the value of those who succeed in obtaining acknowledgement of worth in a materialist world. Their religious language with its material references calls attention to the crisis of religion in a materialist construct where, by definition, Man himself has become the limits, the power and the creator. Thus, the metaphysical is replaced by the worship of the powerful

individual. The language, transferred from metaphysical metaphor to mundane example, stresses the letter of the law over the spirit. The islanders embody a material construct to which metaphysical references are applied, not to describe a relationship between mankind and the cosmos, but to control the many for the power and augmentation of the few.

The Fit, in its extremity, is perhaps easier to tabulate. Despite appearances, it is ironically similar to the picture above, the physical counterpart to Wendell's nature: the physical oppression of the many for the profit of the powerful. Profit and science, the gods of scientific materialism, rule here. Science allows man to usurp the place of the deity, to "tame" both man and nature, to "create", and to become, himself the Limit and Creator. The worship of science makes guinea pigs of us all.

The language elaborates both Man and spirit in physical terms that celebrate the glory of Man's power. Those without power become insignificant pawns, "roles" in contrived scenarios that suggest a mockery of the concept of destiny. Thus, it is implied, there is nothing that cannot be known and controlled; nothing that is not within the power of Man to make or break. Not all men, of course, but those who are shown, through their success, to be "superior", those who deserve the epithet of "Man".

At the root of the individualist world, not in ideal but in practice, is a separation between "Man" and "non-man", the latter having neither power nor wealth nor value. Those without power are, by definition, expendable, material tools for the creative, controlling power of "Man".

If Man is the centre and creator of the world, any concept of a metaphysical universe must, by definition, be a false invention

used to control those who have not had the "worth" to achieve humanhood. (This is the way ancient religions are often taught!) Nebeworld's contrived worship of the King of Light is a view of religion seen from the individualist, scientific materialist perspective: another means of control and oppression. It comes into sharp contrast, however, with the world view of the Bengry's which is informed by a metaphysical cohesion that gives value and significance to all elements of creation.

The soldiers have no value and no choices. Their sense of worth emanates from a mythology cynically constructed and enforced in order to divest them of inter-active significance and personal consequence. Their high Grid position is unmistakable.

Had we been introduced to the soldiers directly, we might either have found some comfort in their apparent safety in a mythology that ensures consistency and apparent belonging or cynically dismissed their naivety. However, meeting them through the self-congratulatory scientists calls into question our assumptions about power, the moral justifications of science, and its lauded impartiality. The blatant manipulation and abuse of the soldiers ironically arouses our individualist sensibilities, preparing the ground for a more integrated perspective. The double vision created by presenting both the scientists' and the soldiers' perspectives suggests all methods of mystification and automatic justification are suspect.

As outsiders, the Bengry's are neither cognizant of nor bound by the assumptions and regulations the others take for granted. Their presence sets these in relief, redefining them from absolutes to alternatives.

The Bengry's are at home in the universe. They form a small, integrated group in which each member is acknowledged, valued and

credited. The motif of "naming" whenever they meet reinforces this sense of unity. They see themselves as a natural part of both the human and natural world. Caring, concerned and curious, their language relates human experience to the natural world and v.v. Physical phenomena and nature are central terms of evaluation and signification.

Bengry's God is neither one of wrath nor an unapproachable authoritarian. Nor, in contrast to that of the soldiers and the islanders, is He human! Bengry's God is the source of the Creation and significance, the ultimate representative of an interactive, meaningful universe and symbol of a coherent, over-riding pattern. His existence confirms and give meaning. By definition, He is in direct competition with Sir Wendell Bain.

Bengry's use of the Bible as signifying reference implies a continuum justifying Man's place in the cosmos and his obligation to Creation. Man and Nature are thus imbued with meaning, *per se*, which extends beyond the lifetime of the individual person.

Arguably, an individualist work might have shown the spectacular success of Sir Wendell Bain, even heralded the products of his prowess: the profitable mine, the advancement of the science of psychology, the granting of a small isolated group of apparent fanatics the rehabilitation of the isolated habitat and their protection. He might, indeed, appear a "benefactor"! Not only the precepts of individualism would then be confirmed, but also the morality of scientific materialist capitalism through the elaboration of the apparent material benefits.

Sons of Light, however, focuses on the consequences of this process on the minimised - the designification and distortion of the many for the benefit and augmentation of the few; the cynical

determinism of science and psychology; the authoritarian use of religious terminology to oppress by materialist morality. As the single line of action moves through the various insulated worlds, it exposes their justifying assumptions. Through a lens coloured by the desirability of integration it isolates their negativity and judges them morally bankrupt, even by individualist terms.

By inference, the low group/grid "freedom" of the successful individual is shown to depend on and be furthered by the oppression of the majority into a high Grid position. However, unlike "the tragic" play, we are not asked to celebrate their forgotten worth but to entertain the possibility of an alternative perspective in which their value would be actively acknowledged. Their protestations of uniqueness - the islanders' purity of group, the soldiers' "King of Light" - are exposed as tattered rags clothing their bare lack of acknowledgment, power, value and autonomy.

THE DESCENT

The play opens with an image: the Bengryes arrive on the island. The Pastor carries Sam. Biblical associations come to mind: St Christopher, Abraham and Isaac, even a Pieta, all stressing relationship and carrying intimations of ritual pattern, sacrifice. These associations are supported by the first speech:

Lie you here now, Samuel. Son. Shadow of this peat. A while. Till we are met. No thicket here to hid no ram. Rock. Peat. Hagg. Shiver? Shall warm you. Best nor any gift I'll have to warm you.

The short, clipped, phrases call attention to the language itself. The choice of words suggest an older, more formal language,

4. Part I, Act I, p3

syntax and reference resonant of the Bible. "Shadow of this peat", "thicket", "ram", "hag", both establish the bleak setting and set human experience in a context of concrete natural phenomena. The Biblical tone suggests a setting where human experience is set in a moral, metaphysical universe; Biblical stories where individual actions affect and stand for the community as well as moral and spiritual values. The constant references to both nature and the Bible invest the action with significance beyond its immediate relevance and set up a series of reflections through which it can be tabulated.

The short phrases build to Bengry's longer expression of relationship giving it resonance beyond the immediate father/son reference: "Best nor any gift, I'll have to warn you". An immediate moral context is implicit in the language. The linking of the terse, condensed phrases with the hard, barren island and the natural references establishes from the beginning an inter-active relationship between human life, the natural world, and a moral, metaphysical cosmos with implicit standards.

SAM: Why are we not met? Could be its not the time for our coming, Father. Too late, an' the brethan anghrey. Or a time too soon, then not prepared.⁵

"Till we are met", "Too late ... too soon", "the time for our coming": the weighty buildup and its sense of immense rejects the possibility of simple personal mismanagement for intimations of destiny, setting personal experience in a larger pattern whose form and significance are yet to be revealed and investing it with a definitive morality.

The opening image and language set the terms for the action.

5. Part I, Act I, p3

Although the emphasis shifts from one member to another during the play, the Bengrys remain at the action's centre, both personally and as a source of effective influence, a manifestation of spirit. The Biblical tone of the language sets the action in a metaphysical context which is strengthened as the Bengrys begin to associate present action with Biblical example. The Bible itself implies a strong Group/Gird perspective, a concept of integration with metaphysical justification and obligations to both the whole and the parts. Thus, relationship is a central force.

Bengry's response to Sam, for example, isolates the immediate pattern of action and invests it with significance by association with Biblical parable:

"Foolish virgins?"

It is irrelevant whether the viewer's Biblical knowledge extends to a recollection of this story, or any of the Biblical references. The main function of these references is not to construct a crossword puzzle but to establish a resonant context for the action. The Bible stands for a metaphysical tradition where the presence of Man on earth is justified by the act of Creation itself, and his actions are invested with moral content in relationship to the Creator. This forms the foundation of the Bengry's reality construct and sets a moral and imagistic framework for the action. The assumption of the inter-relationship with the cosmos also implies the moral obligation of mutual responsibility.

The play is so tightly knit, not only are the major issues, themes, and directions set in the first few moments, but the slightest juxtaposition of language and action suggests recurring resonances. For example, as John defines the island as "Volcanic. Dead", the islanders arrive, and Michael says, "Here's Man. Da." What might

appear to be two distinct statements, or even a contradiction, is the inception of an evaluative process. Associations have already been established between Mankind and the natural world. "Dead" and "volcanic" are soon seen to be an apt description of the human life, as well. The search begins for a definition of "Man/human".

Almost immediately, the Bengrys are at loggerheads with the islanders, and at least two major themes begin their elaborative process: the meaning and relevance of knowledge; the dichotomy between conformity and integration.

NEAND: Shall so luik forward, Pastor Bengry, to the teaching of your sons.

BENGRY: No, brother Neand. brother Yagg. My Michael and Samuel shall not be going to your school. I'm sorry ... I made this plain.

NEAND: Here all guid boys must come to schuil.⁶

The terms are further elaborated later:

YAGG: Let roam like savage beasts, wild-reared, wild-dressed; saws wildness in our children's heads. All children wuld be wild an they were let be.

NEAND: Pastor, they must come to school. Be dressed and disciplined like all the rest.⁷

The community places strong moral valence on conformity. This confrontation reveals two conflicting reality systems, exposing their moral assumptions and implications. To Bengry, Knowledge is an obligation and necessity. The purpose of education is to encourage curiosity and acquire knowledge of oneself and the world; it is a necessity for growth. There are no limits. We later see this process in action. The purpose of the island school, however, is to control, to enforce limits, to turn growth into replication. School

6. Part I, Act I, p4

7. Part I, Act II, p29

is for "socialising", ensuring a containable order; a training for the Grid position by ensuring obedience to authority. The islanders express a fear of the uncontrolled, of spontaneity, change and growth. Ambiguity, uncertainty, lack of regulation signal profound chaos. Their view of nature is also tinged with suspicion. The natural world, humans included, is implicitly dangerous, liable at any moment to sweep out of control and wreak havoc. They are compelled to "tame" within their bidding, to fear that which cannot or will not conform.

Unexpectedly, perhaps, Nebewold's Pit reflects a similar necessity for conformity. Nebewold's disdain for human nature is blatant in his distortion and denigration of it for his own ends. Where the islanders fear spontaneity and feeling, he belittles them using the vulnerabilities of the human condition to prove the superiority of science and logic. The islanders use the letter of the religious law to control, isolate and restrict. Nebewold uses the percepts of science to create his "social order" of abject regimentation. Throughout, the action projects the image of the Biblical adage: "As it is above, so is below".

In common terminology, "integration" and "conformity" are often used as synonyms implying suppression of unique qualities. Through the action of the play, these terms are distinguished and defined. The implications are conscientiously elaborated, and they are shown to be virtual opposites. Conformity implies the subjection, if not the elimination, of individual characteristics, differences and outstanding traits in deference to group identity. Integration, using the same terms, necessitates putting one's characteristics, differences and abilities to use for the benefit of the group. In the one, the part is denied and absorbed; in the other, the part

is acknowledged and validated through participation.

Knowledge is the key to the differences between the various world views and to the informing core of the alternative vision. Nebewold's power lies in keeping his captives ignorant. The islanders also live in wilful ignorance. "Education" in their school is a process of denial designed to maintain the control of authority and the low Grid position. Knowledge is seen as a genuine threat to the status quo. Learning, however, is an intrinsic part of the Bengrya's life and world view. Assumed to be both a right and obligation, it is the key to the health of both the individual and the whole, a natural extension of the inclusive perspective, in direct opposition to the exclusive view of both the islanders and Nebewold.

The process of education is presented as the ideal integrated process.

SAM: Father is our teacher, Sir.

MICHAEL: And John.

SAM: John is our mother, too. Since our earthly mother died.⁸

Learning and knowledge are inextricably bound with a willing acceptance of role, implying that they, too, are obligations. (They naturally associate the information that John has taken the mothering role with education).

SAM: When do we begin our tasks, Father? Our task ye promised us? The island our schuil, init each of us his book? Mike, the flowers, aa the shore. John the rock?⁹

The enthusiasm is unmistakable. The use of the word "task" with "promise" stands out, focusing on the sweetness of obligation. The "task" is a privilege, a benefit to both the enactor and the reci-

8. Part I, Act II, p4

9. Part I, Act I, p16

pient. "The island our echuil" barely needs elaboration. Man's obligation, by dint of his placing in the universe and his relationship to it, is to gain knowledge, familiarity and understanding of himself and of that world.

Bengry encourages love of the world through interest in it. The integration of the Bengry family, both within the family and the world, is illustrated through the process of their education. Each concentrates on one element and then shares his discoveries and insights with the others.

SAM: Shells, father. Seaweed and shells.

Bengry is not a detached authority, but an enthusiastic participant.

BENGRY: Lets see the shells ... And this? Beautiful. Shaft. Look, of ivory. Spiral. So delicate.¹⁰

Their lesson is a tiny model of a working ideal of integration. Each brings his own ability and knowledge to be shared and absorbed by the unit, thus augmenting the whole. Education is thus extended beyond the personal accumulation of knowledge to the process which adds to the strength and well-being of the larger body and, in the process, confirms group unity.

This little scene of integration in action not only illustrates the significance of knowledge to the process, but also serves to compound the relationship between Mankind and the physical world both as an existential necessity and as a source of metaphoric reference within the play.

BENGRY: I know John knows. Mm? Wendeltrap. All right, lets all share it.

MICHAEL: A wendel-trap. To trap Sir Wendell Bain.

BENGRY: Here a a grim one.

SAM: Urchinhead. The deep has eaten holes in it, father. Let

10. Part I, Act II, p27

daylight into its empty skull.
CHILD MANATOND: ...Paik heid.¹¹

Constant cross-references associate human life with natural phenomena and v.v establishing a strong metaphoric context for the action.

SENGRY: Good Finding, Samuel. Michael?
MICHAEL: Flowers ...Da...
SAMUEL: Eye bright
MICHAEL: Torment ...
MICHAEL: Dark Doctor¹²
SENGRY: Black Medic

This network of inter-relationships is both a statement and a manifestation of a strong integrated vision, the intimations of a destined action fitting into an overall pattern of meaning.

The boys' curiosity and fearlessness distinguishes them sharply from the islanders. When the others hide from the fog (a commonplace image of ignorance) Michael brazenly meets and tears the mask off the Fog King. Knowledge, though, as the islanders suspect, is dangerous. Sam's genuine pity for the mutilated Pastor and the deformed children and Michael's exposure to the King lead inevitably to their untimely deaths. Here, however, Death is not the culmination of action. Unlike works founded on personal identification, Sons of Light presents a perspective extending beyond the physical life of the individual. The procession towards Light continues. Stephen and John, and the inspiration of the silent but present Bengry, continue the quest. Without the contribution of the twins, however, it could never have been completed.

Bengry's view of his own parenthood confirms this perspective:

11. Part I, Act II, p28

12. Part I, Act II, p28

Our sons are never altogether ours. Angels, only, loaned us a little while for our mean fathering. Strangers from some further shore ...

Relationship itself is a precious obligation, invested with significance through its confirmation and role as part of the larger meta-physical pattern. Each individual, a separate story making an essential part of a greater, meaningful, whole. In this, content and form reinforce each other throughout the play.

The islanders' disregard for the entire concept of relationship is illustrated through their treatment of their few remaining children. In the light of the lost children, one might expect those remaining, however imperfect, to be held especially dear. Both Child Manatond and Stephen, however, are denigrated, rejected, and marginalised for their difference and seen by the islanders as reminders of the obligation to conform: at best, "a test", a "cross", at worst, a threat.

The confrontation initiated over schooling grows when Bengry chooses Stephen to be Steward at Communion, exposing a multitude of critical issues. Through questions of the significance and functioning of role, the sources of justifying precepts are exposed and the value systems of the Bengrys and the islanders laid bare. Stephen's journey towards Selfhood is initiated; the power and consequence of influence are manifested; and the necessity for knowledge for growth and change are dramatised.

Role and definition are essential to the action. They set the limits, define significance, and motivated the action. Bengry assumes a world inter-connected both above and below by active relationship and justified through the example of Biblical tradition, the

physical expression of metaphysical pattern. The islanders define themselves in relation to Sir Wendell Bain. Where Bengry's perspective renders him active, the islanders' high Grid perspective makes them re-active. The choice of Stephen as Steward exposes the underlying structures.

Bengry does not choose Stephen for his unique personal qualities. His choice is an overt confirmation of Group and Grid. Stephen's viability for the role lies in his membership of the Group. Also, he is pushing Manatond's wheelchair which, arguably, pictures him as carer and helper. The Group's objection implies, first, his exclusion; second, the terms of this exclusion; and, third, an underlying informing precept based on individual essence.

"He is not fit"

Bengry denies the reference and thus the implied significances. Stressing Group integrity, he exposes the impasse between the justifying premises.

"What? You taught him, and not fit"¹⁴

They are barely speaking the same language. The same words refer to entirely different underlying precepts. Although Bengry concedes to question Stephen on the Bible, their supposedly shared signifying source, the islanders' panic is not abated.

SISTER CROY: Pastor, he's the last ...

BENGRY: Where shall that "last" be placed, though, when the many are called and the few chosen.¹⁵

Unable to express the assumptions informing their objections, the islanders are confounded by Bengry's using for change and inclusion

14. Part I, Act I, p14

15. Part I, Act I, p13

the terms and justifications they use to oppress and exclude.

Having obtained suitable answers to his catacisms and noted Stephen's fear of 'touch', Bengry proceeds by investing Stephen with validity through his given name.

BENGRY: The name yuir mather an' yuir father gave ye

YESC: S-T-aphen. S-Taphen, sir

BENGRY: Stephen. No name to be ashamed of. Michael, tell him, who was Stephen.

MICHAEL: First Christian martyr, Da. Put to Death with cruel stones.

SAM: Stephance is the Greek for crown. 16

The Bengrys confirm Stephen's group membership and validate the person by setting him in a series of contexts beginning with the family itself and extending to the historical and metaphysical, affirming his place in the story of Mankind.

The process of "naming" is a constant motif in the play. Whenever the Bengry's meet, they acknowledge each other by name:

MICHAEL: John?

SAM: John?

JOHN: Mick, Sam. Father?

MICHAEL: Da?

SAM: Father?

BENGRY: Well, John, Michael, Samuel. What did you learn today? 17

Obviously unnecessary for the dissemination of information, this refrain sets up a contextual pattern in the body of the work. It both confirms group unity and acknowledges the individual. It also registers the loss of the individual in the continuing group. The exchange also sets up an echoing sound motif. The name acknowledges the value of the Other. Like Adam, the Bengry's acknowledge, value and confirm relationship by "naming".

16. Part I, Act I, p7

17. Part I, Act II, p25

The incident with Stephen is a prologue to the open confrontation over Communion. This scene is preceded by Sister Duinhead's description of the Sunday when the children drowned, elaborating the awful context of fear in which the islanders live and offering it as justification for their position. She emphasises her own survival and the terms of that survival: obedience. ("I grew affeared. I hid. I crept. I ran") The islanders' obedience, their fear of change, lack of trust and fear of contact are justified by event. The spiritual "purity" of 17th century Puritans, informed by unity of Group and a special relationship with God is replaced here by the unifying factor of naked fear. "Purity" refers not to spirit but the mundane. ("Babalonish-dressed, faces painted, masks, crowns, axes crossed, a garish ride upon the deep"). Ambiguity is dangerous and fearful. Separateness and obedience, Good, not of the group (they believe themselves to be alone on the island) but within the group. (Hardly difficult to see why the island is barren!)

SISTER DUINHEAD: Out of that clear cold sky, His - Furryhammer fell. Bolt glorious. Pitying nuir beauty nuir no youthfulness. Only I, through mine guid dread, spared.¹⁸

Ultimately, the issue centres on assessing to whom this dread obedience is owed. These scenes are linked through opposition: the first stresses fear, denial, wrath; the second, acceptance, love, confirmation and relationship. The confrontation exposes the underlying justifying systems. The religious subject matter establishes a spiritual context and focuses the argument on the fundamental question: the signifying definition of Man's place in the Cosmos.

The islanders' objection to Bengry's service is presented in the context of the lost children:

18. Part I, Act I, p12

SISTER D: And now we heir, how ye intend ta intherduce among us ... ain strange observance ... Breakin' of Bread, the Blood of Jesus, from one common chalice ...

SENGRY: A symbol how we must be one together in his Redeeming. From now, one chalice. Yes. One Steward to stand at the Table of the Lord. All to approach; kneel there; and take, from him. It is a true ceremony.¹⁹

It's difficult to imagine how a Communion could be other-

wise: a celebration and confirmation of both group unity and their communal, inter-active relationship with God. A service where each drinks from his own Communion cup denies both group and the symbolic affirmation of unity throwing into question the ritual itself. Would such a "communion" be a celebration of isolation or a habit undertaken in terror of change? The Bible, as Sengry's motivation and confirmation, inspires a unity of content and form. The islanders, however, turn from the origins of the ritual and seek justification from their validating source, Sir Wendell Bain.

Instead of a theological debate we are met with a confrontation over signifying sources. The cosmological view of the islanders begins and ends with Sir Wendell Bain. Their religious fervour is exposed as a guise for desperate dependence. The subject matter of high Grid is inevitably obedience and fear. They owe their obedience to Bain and seek acknowledgement from him. Only he has the power to maintain the status quo. Consequently, Bain is in direct conflict with the unifying concept of a metaphysical Creator.

The Communion is a centralising focus. The form and significance of the ritual and its final justification not only elaborate the underlying cosmologies but also expose the very process by which individuals and actions are perceived, judged and given meaning. This exposure actualises the possibility, if not the necessity, of

19. Part I, Act I, p13

change.

Ostensibly, the viewer is given a choice. However, the fierce literalness of the islanders and their insistence on Sir Wendell in a specifically spiritual matter inclines the viewer towards the necessity for change and affiliates her with Bengry's developing quest: to turn fearful isolation into integrating relationship. To accomplish what the islanders most fear: to change the shape of their world and the terms by which Man and his actions gain value and effect.

NEAND: The ceremony and our stewardship. Sir Wendell requires - that ye re-instate.

BENGRY: Sir Wendell Bain? Who has not condescended from his castle yet to darken my chapel door?²⁰

The self-justification of the islanders requires establishing Sir Wendell in the role of Maker and Breaker, thus confirming his superiority and their inferiority in comparison.

YAGG: But for Sir Wendell Bain we'd none of us be here. We'd all abandoned our struggle long since, but for him ... Then squalor there was here, the barrenness, contagion, death of the newborn.

(Intimations of the plagues of Egypt!)

The grave decision had been taken, Brothers, Sisters, quit or perish; leave this rock of our birth to wind and water and the birds. On that very eve of our migration, led by what pillar of fire we do not know, he came ... And grafted us holdfast here, never again to be bowed down or driven off but stand, work, proud against that element and that deep -

BENGRY: He came to cut a quarry, Brother, not Tables of Stone.²¹

The opposing uses of Biblical reference are unmistakable. Bengry uses the Bible to give form and meaning to immediate occurrences by associating them with traditional pattern and spiritual content. Yagg and Neand, to transfer the power of the Almighty to

20. Part , Act II, p30

21. Part I, Act II, p30

Wendell Bain.

The purpose of the argument is to establish the source of power and the moral centre to which allegiance and obligation is owed and from which meaning is projected. If it's Sir Wendell Bain, the universe by definition is limited to the scope and power of mankind. Man, then, must be subject to the will and whim of another like himself whose control is greater. This power is augmented by those subject to his will. (It was, after all, not God's "Fury-hammer" which smote the hapless boat but the powerful hand of Wendell Bain) The high Grid majority empowers and perpetuates the power of the few low g/q. The islanders define themselves in relationship to Sir Wendell. Ironically, his unique value reflects their lack of power and lesser significance.

If, however, the ultimate reference is a metaphysical power, the very act of Creation implies significance. By definition, integration implies both confirmation and obligation. Where the islanders perceive themselves as dependant, for both existence and relevance, on Sir Wendell, and, by inference, inferior to him, to Bengry, the very fact of existence implies the right to exist, justifies Man's worth and establishes a set of obligations between humans and all Creation.

It might be worth pointing out that "religion", as a faith or an institution, is not what is at stake. There is no emphasis on worship or interpretation. The Biblical references and images are used in two basic ways. The confrontation between their use by the islanders and Bengry elaborates the underlying assumptions and implicit world views. Bengry's consistent references also establish the moral context of the action, projecting the world view that gives it meaning. The Bible, so to speak, is stripped to its own underlying

precepts and activated to establish an alternative context, an image of Life integrated by Creation and confirmed through time. A physical expression and justification of the integrated vision where the act of Creation itself sets Man in an interactive world and places responsibility in his hands. This responsibility both confirms Man's worth and infuses his actions with significance and effect.

The application of Biblical reference to Bain implies more than an equality with the Almighty. Bain has usurped His place.

YAGG: Yet also a commandment, Pastor. Aye. In covenant to Him. Above, for our new life, to fashion of our dwelling place a loving memory of His purpose for Mankind.²²

The initial reference is to Bain. The second "His" ambiguous, but blasphemous enough, especially in contrast to Bengry's referential context in which the metaphysical Creator and signifier is always at the source. Bain has replaced God as Creator and the source of significance and destiny.

Having restricted power and significance to the limits of Mankind, however, the islanders are forced to turn their language, originally a restricted code confirming the presence of God and the significance of Creation, to mundane, material matters, thus reducing the reference and creating a bizarre imbalance between the image and the example. When the islanders, for example, cannot find Stephen, they turn on Bengry:

Blasphemer. Oh it is coming to pass, exactly as quid Sir Wendell said. Our ordeals are His trials of us ... Shapes of our darkness, this smiling Eli and his three black sons. Oh Wrath, sweet Wrath, spin, nearer, nearer, like an scorching sun, scorch and burn this festered place, burn this vile Satan out.²³

22. Part I, Act II, p30

23. Part I, Act II, p31

As it happens, Sister Duinhead's curse is fatally ironic. With the help of the Bengry's the Lord does indeed scourge and burn this "feasting place", but it is herself and the islanders who are cleansed from it. Nonetheless, her response does appear somewhat excessive, especially as a reply to Bengry's comment:

The grave decision, quit or die? Our sons cannot be ours forever. Our sons are gifts from God. Dark though they burn, they come from Him and burn for Him again. Our Lord himself spoke of the sword he must bring between father and son.²⁴

Bengry's consistency gives his vision credibility and allows it to transcend mere personal opinion. His world view, assuming metaphysical integrity and the precious obligation of relationship, is also manifest in his behaviour. (This is not merely a hypocritical *salva*.) Bengry himself loses his sons, and his behaviour confirms his unquestioned confidence in the larger pattern. Here, too the underlying sense of destiny that implies a pattern and direction beyond the power and sight of Man and invests the present with meaning is suggested.

Seeing the islanders consumed by hatred and wrath, the antitheses of "life-giving" emotions, propels Bengry into action:

What God is this you worship? One of love? no! All I hear is Wrath. Wrath. Only His Chastisement can transfigure you? God? God? no! God! Covenant-model for His Will on Earth - each face like stretched on the torturer's last? I come to tip this painted tabernacle upside down!²⁵

What might have been a misunderstanding of terms has been revealed to be a clash between two immutable, opposing world views. Although the referential source is the same text, and "He" the final adjudicator,

24. Part I, Act II, p31

25. Part I, Act II, p31

in one case, "He" is a man whose power over men belittles them. In the other, a metaphysical Creator whose very act of Creation implies equal significance and worth. The first separates through fear, the other unifies through love. One demands stability, the other, change. "By their deeds thou shalt know them". Bengry's pastorship is at an end.

"As it is above, so is below". "Turn the world upside down". The theme rings not only through the language but through the images and action as well. Eventually, the verbal imagery becomes manifest in the action.

THE PIT

Stephen, energised by Bengry's attention, has taken independent action and left the limits of the upper island to discover the Pit. Our first glimpse of the Pit is short and violent, wedged into the developing crisis between Bengry and the islanders in Part One. Whereas the Bengrys suggested images of relationship, the Pit resonates with images of mass oppression: Metropolis, Hieronymus Bosch, Concentration camps, stressing the negation of worth, the loss of definition and will. The first words we hear correspond:

Avonmouth. England. Male. Middle age. Category P. intake process normal. Agent R-zero-three. Item, wallets, one; contents: driving licence, terminate. Bank card, terminate. Photograph of presumed wife, reserve. Keys, small cash, cigarette lighter, watch. No special characteristics. Two three one six nine zero three.²⁶

The individual is reduced to objects and numbers. The artifacts themselves remind us that there had been a personal life that is now reduced to facts. The situation on the island is more

26. Part I, Act II, p23

overt and extreme here: a few "genuine" "Men" in power over those who "in the catalogue pass for men". The insignificant majority are used for experiment and work to further augment the worthy few.

This is presumably already a controlled scenario. These "guards" are Operatives; the subject without knowing it has spontaneously selected a function-role and activated the Programme on himself.²⁷

The "subject" is merely the object of scientific experiment. The concepts of free will and personality are inapplicable. The perspective is totally deterministic. The assumption is that there are a limited number of "scenarios" and, more important, that the human will "without knowing it" automatically snap into one and play it out. [The "subject" of course, is an irrelevant one of many.] Nebewold admits he hesitates from revealing the inevitable goal, for fear of robbing the victim of his "delusion of identity". The "goal", of course, must be victimisation (and torture) which merely compounds the insignificance of the subject. The concept of the pre-determined "scenario", itself, is a mockery of the idea of destiny.

Unbeknownst to the islanders, the purpose of their existence is the massive underground pit where Bain's mining development takes place. Their security is dependent on the slavery of others. The islanders' ignorance is wilful. The ignorance of the soldiers, innocent and enforced. Nebewold's knowledge, vast in scientific accumulation, is restrictive, over-burdened and life-destructive. It lacks the fundamental purpose of knowledge: understanding. In his hands, knowledge is merely a tool and symbol of power.

Bengry's terse speech sets up a restricted code where the

27. Part I, Act II, p25

resonant phrases and references are informed by the necessity of relationship and the acknowledgement of a larger pattern of which the present is an active part. Nebawold's elaborated language is, in contrast, overly complex, a series of isolating delineations constantly in need of further elaboration. Hence, Wamwood is there to feed him questions (whose response will further elaborate his statements). However, even she, an apparent equal, is of so little consequence to him that he can't even remember her name from one moment to the next.

At this great depth in the earth we now arrive; it may seem paradoxical to say so but I am hoping that your head is good for heights.²⁸

Both the reinforcement of the motif established in Part One - a world "upside down" - and a reminder of the adage "As it is above, so is below". A world to be "over-turned" and an image of integrity where all parts reflect each other and the state of the whole.

The justification of this underground world is Science, the great glory of Man. The application of scientific principles is expressed through scientific language, both unusual, professional - sounding terms, and psychological terminology commonly used to justify everyday behaviour: "Its a prototype" ...

The weakness in the system, the achilles heel of psychological pre-determinism is intimated at the beginning. Nebawold, we learn, has divested the soldier/worker of all traces of both individuality and humanity except, he admits, those vestiges which bind them to the natural world:

28. Part II, Act III, p35

WEMWOOD: You've set them free from the circadian rhythm?
NEB: But not altogether from the lunar: once each month
still, in the water of the tissues of these, the ghost of
lunar tide.²⁹

As with the Biblical references, it is not essential for the viewer to know the exact meaning of each reference. The tone of the language and the use of scientific terms - cold, hard, factual terms applied to living beings - gives the significance of the speeches. Nebewold and Wemwood "overlooking" the soldiers supply the visual image of their assumed superiority, the language, its basis.

Wemwood introduces a moral/philosophical element:

It could not be defined as obedience, so much. Not even altogether an enslavement ... The myth of you as technologue of tyranny could at first seem vindicated, all the appearances of a Platonic facism are superficially present ... But for this joy. This transfiguration ... Their equivalent above in the streets show no such joy.³⁰

The dry complexity of the language is highlighted by the compulsion to complicate in the course of elaboration and calls attention to the elaborative process used in order to mask: to elaborate "joy" with "transfiguration" signals to the viewer that the language is constructed to deny communication and to exhalt the scientific process, *per se*.

The sense of the paragraph is even more shocking. Unmasked from the impressive, self-generating facade, it suggests that as long as people appear contented, even happy, you can treat them however you wish for your own ends! Nebewold's response confirms both elements:

29. Part II, Act III, p35

30. Part II, Act III, p36

In terms of Freudian technology it is an evident equation. One is sublimating a Pleasure Principle altogether into Reality Principle. Reality is what is. It is the only moral political act, to fuse man into integration with Reality and in experience of joy.³¹

The psychological terminology establishes a sense of moral justification, implying science to be an absolute standard, impersonal and beyond human conscience. The language reduces human experience and significance to simplistic factual principles and implies that the relevance of human existence is to supply the proof and example of the validity of these principles. Psychology, whose original aim was to understand, becomes a process of reduction. Also implied, of course, is that the purpose of "science" is to manipulate others for one's own ends, thus establishing a hierarchy between manipulator and manipulated. Psychology, here, can be seen as a representative for Science as a whole.

Nebewold's insistence on "reality" is nothing short of bizarre. He himself is the creator of this state of affairs. The suggestion that "reality" is a status quo that cannot be altered is in direct conflict with the knowledge that this "reality" is Nebewold's construction. "Reality" itself, then, is shown to be a state of affairs imposed on the weak by the strong. Since it is merely a construction, it is alterable. Nebewold's "political act" consists of creating a state of affairs and ensuring its continuance. The possibility (if not the necessity) of change is inherent in the presentation. Situations, justifications and interpretations one might ordinarily have taken for granted are highlighted so their anomalies are revealed and they become questionable.

31. Part II, Act III, p36

Although, for example, a generalized liberalism might motivate protest against various scientific activities, Science is still generally accepted as a positive good and arguably the greatest achievement of mankind. Indeed, it has often been used to justify human existence, the glory of civilization and proof of the progress and superiority of the species. The misuses are exceptions. Nebewold, however, is not a monster, but a dedicated scientist. His experiment is an extension of conventionally accepted study. Freud's concepts, although somewhat garbled, have been incorporated into everyday speech. Nebewold has taken them to their extreme in the service of the goals of individualism. The plight of the soldiers augments not only the wealth and power of Sir Wendell Bain, but also Nebewold's superiority both as scientist and, by association, a "Man". These terms of evaluation, of course, are directly opposed to Bengry's assumptions of interaction and "feeling" as definitive of life and value.

Nebewold's pride in his achievement and Wemwood's admiration polarise the audience. Although Wemwood is moved almost to speechlessness by the "magnificence" of Nebewold's scheme:

The trust of it ... to lie there, threaded into that solid rock ... all the weight of stone upon one's mouth ... I am chastened, Doctor. I fall far short of that equanimity.³²

the image of the soldiers threaded into the solid rock, sleeping in rock and waking only to work comes over as an appalling crystallisation of their dehumanisation.

Nebewold's questioning of Gower brings to the fore the constant process of evaluation working through the action, the struggle to create a definition and concept of mankind through the myriad

32. Part II, Act III, p36

of definitions and evaluations existing on the island. It begins with Sam's "Here's Men, Da" and continues as Sam and Michael struggle to define Child Manatond.

MICHAEL: In the name of God, Sammy, whatever's thon? Is it woman or mahn?

SAM: Not breathin' any. Look. A tear. Its alive.

MICHAEL: A woman then.

SAM: Men cry.

MICHAEL: A poor creature, John ...

SAM: A lump of flesh³³

When their attempts at identification by superficial detail - a beard, a breast - fail, they resort to basics - dead or alive - and arrive at two basic criteria: to be human is to be alive and have feelings (it cries). The exclusion of Child Manatond and Stephen by the islanders is also part of the process of definition and evaluation. Within the influence of the Bengry's, "human" is distinguished from "thing" through the expression of feeling. "Angel" becomes an intermediary between Man and God: a man, it transpires, with some knowledge of that larger pattern of destiny. At the same time, "Angel" and "Man" are seen as relative. Here, in the pit, the process is more explicit. The distinctions within the scheme are rigidly set. Terms of material value, like metal and currency, they are imposed and regulated externally, if not arbitrarily.

Gold does not speak to Iron except to say, Iron do. Iron does not speak to Gold except to say, yes, Gold, I Iron obey.³⁴

This distinction between Iron and Gold sets up a mini-hierarchy within the mass. As the islanders' insistence on Group masks their dependence on and insignification in relation to Wendell Bain, the soldiers' hierarchy masks their oppression. The soldiers are entirely

33. Part I, Act I, p5

34. Part II, Act III, p37

defined through Grid. Even their entrance to the "Heaven" of the King of Light is earned only through work. Gold may have the right to place obligations on Iron, but Gold's orders themselves come from Nebewold and thus, implicitly, from Bain whose only concern is his benefit from the proceeds of the mine.

WEMWOOD: How far down, in fact, does Sir Wendell Bain's acquaintance with the project go?

NES: No deeper than any man's. He makes the safe, conventional assumptions: Restricted Area, here must be clever whitecoats at their subterranean work, upon some new abomination to help Great Britain recover the tatters of her lost hegemony in the earth. He sleeps easy.³⁵

There is no other reference in the play to national need. The implication is that this is an easy, unquestionable justification which need not even be verified. The responsibility for one's actions and their consequences passes back to the scientists (the revered "professionals") and the justification of national necessity, so, without the risk of exposure or criticism, these machinations go to create and justify individual, personal power, value and success.

Nebewold prides himself on his success in divesting his charges of thought, images and human desires. To Nebewold, feeling, itself, is proof of inferiority, a principle evident in the rigid "objectivity" of his language. However, his ability to wrest these qualities from their "natural" state has been even less successful than he presumes. Gower braves discovery to play a game he intuitively knows is dangerous; his compulsion is greater than his fear.

GOWER: Corporal Gower is King. I am King. Chuck, you are our Mother. Blackie is our Child. (forlorn gestures of tenderness)

CHUCK: Corporal Gower, what is a Mother?

GOWER: (pause) Mother is a ... soldier, who is ... I say

Chuck is my child.³⁶

CHUCK: What is Child?

GOWER: A soldier who is ... I put my hand on his head. I say you are my ch...³⁷

An elemental need impels Gower. His description delineates the nature of that need - not to HAVE a mother, nor to BE mothered, nor even to love and be loved. Indeed, he never ceases to define "love" in terms of the false King. What Gower outlines - "I say Chuck is my child ... I put my hand on his head. I say, you are my child" - is the fact of relationship, the basic form and structure of relationship *per se*. The need for relationship is nakedly stated to be intrinsic to the human condition.

The assumption that, next to the survival demands of living things, the one need that cannot be obliterated from the human condition is the need for relationship is clearly a manifestation of an integrated vision. Both in language and action, relationship is stressed as the centre and expression of meaning.

Gower's compulsion to fulfil the need to experience relationship creates a distance between himself and the others, making him ready to receive Stephen. His inability to comprehend this need or to adjust the terms by which he makes sense of himself, to substitute the terms of high Grid for a language based in relationship, leads inevitably to his appalling demise.

Blacky's description of Stephen stresses comparison:

This comes to us across this water ... we soldiers burn in that. This rises from it. This must be an "angel" from the King.³⁸

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36. Part II, Act III, p41
37. Part II, Act III, p41
38. Part II, Act III, p41/2

All reference comes from the King. The soldiers, their lives, their environment are all given meaning and impetus from the concept of the King, himself another product of Nebewold's scientific skills. They automatically see Stephen as superior to themselves. Stephen's references, however, are different:

STEPHEN: Angel? No, friend. A am an mahn -

GOWER: M-an ...? Mahn, what is that...?P³⁹

Even the most fundamental terms are not shared. To Gower, "humans" are "soldiers". After the King and the "dark angel" Holst, all others are soldiers of the King, defined and valued by their work. Like the islanders, the soldiers are defined and limited by the limits of human power. The King himself is merely a construction making a high Grid position. The value of the soldiers rests only in their augmentation of Nebewold and, like the islanders, the wealth and power of Sir Wendell Bain.

STEPHEN: A man from the island

GOWER: I land?

STEPHEN: Above

GOWER: Above?

STEPHEN: In the world⁴⁰

Elatantly, "above" is bound to confuse the matter since Gower thinks he himself is "in the world" and has already defined Stephen as an "angel".

GOWER: Above? World? This is the world. Above is Paradise. Aha. Paradise above you call the world, because it is your world. He is an angel from the King.⁴¹

Gower's no slouch when it comes to logic! His limited field

39. Part II, Act III, p42

40. Part II, Act III, p42

41. Part II, Act III, p42

of reference and restricted language does not prevent him from thinking things out. It merely prevents him from extending his thought beyond those limits. More important, this does not have to be puzzled out by the audience. The perspective established in Part One and the consequences of our being an audience with an over-view of the action leads us to make comparisons and to focus on the crises of terminology, definition and communication. The dynamics of the action centre on the relationships between language and action, not only the underlying significances of language but the limits and possibilities for action it allows.

The extremity of the situations and the clarity with which the underlying implications of language are exposed, incline us towards Bengry and Stephen. For the process of the play, we become feeling-orientated, relationship-orientated. The extreme de-personalisation of the many that makes possible the validated "individuality" of the few drives us to seek an alternative.

As Gover answers the call to work, Samuel presents a perfect image of integration, placing Man in the great, interactive scheme of an expanding universe:

Then seas off Antrim was powerful fierce, but none so troublesome nor cold as these. Man, dear, the beauty of the earth, to have such shores. Oh lovely shores ... And look at the sand itself. This grain. In this one grain, all colours: grey, fawn, blue, gold. Imagine, in this grain of sand, another universe, world, sapphire sky, grey Skaranay and shore ... Or this all grain, finger, Samuel, shore, Skaranay, world, universe within another great, great grain of sand and upon the finger of some titan Samuel.⁴²

Nebewold's interruption is unwelcome on both the physical and imagistic/emotional level. His breaking into the integrated

42. Part II, Act III, p43

picture is enforced in action as he cuts through the close bond of the Bengrya by sowing seeds of distrust. Doubt and secrecy are the destroyers leading to separation, isolation and death. Secrecy isolates the twins from the family and leaves them fatally vulnerable.

Knowledge, however, cannot be finally silenced. The twins' discoveries feed into the general unmasking of the island's nefarious secrets and wilful, imposed ignorances, partly, at least, because we, the audience, have been party to them. It is possible that the effectiveness of this concept of accumulated knowledge is not only feasible but acceptable in the working of the play because of the presence of the audience who have been party to the discoveries and relevances and integrated them. This subtle use of the audience's over-view allows Rudkin to create, through the consequential behaviour of the characters, an experience of assimilation whereby the experiences of one become part of the knowledge and experience informing others travelling the same path.

Gower eagerly awaits Stephen's return, but communication is impaired by Gower's impeccable logic and limited terms:

GOWER: Water burns. They ring the world and will burn a soldier. Our father has warned us.

STEPHEN: Father? This 'father' is telling you lies!

GOWER: No! No!

STEPHEN: I stand in this water; does it burn me?

GOWER: How can an angel burn?⁴³

Gower's need eventually overcomes his fears. Stephen pours water over Gower's head in a simple image of Baptism which continues the Biblical imagery and, for the audience, prepares Gower for the martyrdom to come.

As Stephen and Gower struggle to the surface, John buries

43. Part II, Act III, p46

Michael. Over the grave, he gives one of many speeches which link the immense process of the earth's creation to the immediate human experience. Here, the process of the earth's formation, the "thousands, thousands of thousands of years, those primal waters lashed the earth".

The emphasis on an extensive concept of time and on a process patiently proceeding over vast periods to a coherent completion is, of course, an expression of an integrated perspective. It also serves to set the immediate action in a larger context and to confirm both its significance in a continuant process and that process itself. John's description gives relevance to every part of the process as the earth moves to form and life.

Then came a time, the vapours-shroud was spent. Feeble, it drifted, tenuous it drifted away. The light of that Sun ... strayed through upon the earth and there were days. The earth was born anew, a creature under Heaven in itself. And each day waxed in warmth. And one such day, in the stillness of that deep, a stirring ...⁴⁴

Also associative with Samuel and Michael, the speech imparts their lives and deaths significance in the process of evolution. Like Samuel's contemplation, it is one of the moments where immediate events are set in an image of vastness of time and the long, but inevitable process of development, subtly reinforcing a sense of continuity, inclusion and necessity for the over-riding action of the play.

That Gower's "gold" would not shine so brightly in "the world" is unsurprising, but Gower expected to be "turned to light". In comparison with Stephen, he finds himself unbearably wanting.

44. Part II, Act III, p48/9

GOWER: You move so easy. Gower is so clumsy ... Gower's gold was a - g-lory in the world - but in this Heaven - Beside - you⁴⁵

Having only terms of acceptance or rejection, Gower interprets Stephen's pity and compassion as rejection and takes refuge in the manufactured hierarchy which gave him a sense of worth:

GOWER: Angel? I am not the soldier the angel came for ... Gower is loathsome to the Angel? Corporal when you speak to me! ... Cruel Angel, trick Gower up to show me all is lovely in this lovely world, but Gower loathsome ... But not the King shall not be false ... Not my King does not find his soldier loathsome. The King is glad in me.⁴⁶

Rather than risk the pain of redefinition, Gower prefers to return to negotiate his death in terms he understands and which appear to give him 'genuine value'. But the validating construction is merely a guise to cover his lack of significance. Gower knows nothing about his world.

Nor does the "King of Light" who is moved by Gower's return to step beyond his titular limits and attempt to receive some personal validation for himself.

KING: But when did ye ever King us? King me true, as Gower has? I was only a robe and a crown till now.⁴⁷

A King, however, is only a robe and crown. Manatond is not a representative of an interactive body but a symbol of oppression, himself and his 'Kingdom' merely tools. Crippled in his own "natural" world, Manatond walks with the benefit of science, but he is still crippled, a puppet without power or independent action, manipulated by Holst

45. Part II, Act III, p51

46. Part II, Act III, p52

47. Part II, Act III, p54

for the purposes of Nebewold and Bain. Even his "participation" in Gower's ordeal is passive.

KING: Holst, after what A've seen you do this night, A can never again be the self A was.

HOLST: Oh majesty, what self was that⁴⁸

HOLST: Somewhere in the Kingdom of the gold some little crack, lets this flaw out and lets Holst in.⁴⁹

Holst's description of his act is a literalisation of the individualist premise of a discrepancy between the inner and outer person. The assumption of unique, intrinsic flaw is activated into physicality as they tear Gower apart.

Gower, however, describes the unthinkable torture in the only language he has, a restricted code confirming the love of the King. The language and the action it describes are actively opposed.

They could not even split my fork. At last Holst said 'we must ease him with saws'. Holst hagged me, most careful, and while he sawed me through my armpits and my groin, I uttered not one cry. Why was that? I came apart quite easy then. Poor King of Love. To find a solder blemished. And have to toil so hard and long unstitching me. That I should make him weep, over whatever blemish Gower's was, in a beloved soldier. Poor King ... To make him grieve ...⁵⁰

In contrast to the islanders, whose language confirms the power of Sir Wendell Bain, Gower is deprived even of the knowledge of the direct source of his oppression. The unbreachable gap between the appalling act and Gower's innocent, almost welcoming description dramatises the limits of language and the direct relationship between language and world view. Gower is a physical manifestation of the discord between language and action, a crystallisation of the oppression which, through suppression of knowledge, experience and lan-

48. Part I, Act III, p57

49. Part I, Act III, p54

50. Part I, Act III, p58

guage, creates a world view engendering self-generating oppression. Gower is the image of the insignification of the many for the significance of the few.

SURRECTION

The word implies the first rising. Not re birth or re-surrection, but the forming out of chaos into form and significance that John describes over Michael's grave. In Part Three, the movement from ignorance to knowledge, from chaos to integration comes to fruition.

As John buries Samuel, he grimly makes Biblical jokes and speaks of the delicate inter-dependence of the elements in the sea: how the variables of light affect the form and sight of its creatures. Again, the human event is set in a larger spatial context and a vast continuum of time. He flickeringly touches on the deaths of Michael and Sam - "because of the light, are born without eyes" - but, more important, projects an image of a larger pattern of which the single elements and the momentary event are small but necessary consistent. It reminds us that there is a larger pattern of action at work.

The process of growing completion is complemented by Stephen who arrives despondent over his loss of Gower.

Oh Gower ... Mine ye were ... Real ye were ... Needing me ... Not in some dream o' the night but out, real, other: self, yuirself; reachin' out toward me from real darkness to be given life ...

Oh. Sheila. Mahn ... Ay, Mahn I am. Its man I am, burn to take man or be tuik by him, a man to give man man ... Give. There's a conundrum. To take must be to give. And so be taken, that must be to give. Equal. Oh, Stephen, from now on act right in the head.⁵¹

51. Part III, Act IV, p62

The conundrum is solved through action: the hunger for relationship lies at the core of the hunger and need for self. Both are found in giving to the Other in acknowledgement of their worth.

Foolish Stephen. Who ever till now thought his hunger could be fed on empty - figures o' the air. So how else, then, than mine - my hunger - has misshapen me ...⁵²

Unexpectedly, perhaps, the issue of individuation is presented as a major obligation in the process of integration. Unlike "the tragic", however, here, it is not an end in itself but a means to an end. In the context of integration and the comparison between integration and conformity, the process of self-development is presented as necessary to personal, social, and cosmological health. Both the process of self-discovery and its necessity for the well-being of the whole are intrinsic to the final effect and significance of the action.

In the larger perspective, the sequence of reflective images of micro/macrocosmic associations are dependent on the assumption that the health of the whole depends on and is reflected in its parts. Thus, Child Manatond's state reflects the state of society, in microcosm, and the macrocosmic condition. The healthy integrity of the whole cannot be achieved until the part has attained its own integrity.

On the smaller scale, the individual cannot contribute to the whole if unaware either of self or the whole, or if disabled by disintegration. Without a self to give, one cannot integrate. The barrenness of the island illustrates the consequences of oppression, debilitation, ignorance and denial of self. The concept of integra-

52. Part III, Act IV, p62

tion with its dependence on relationship demands integration by cogent beings.

The process of attaining selfhood in Song of Light (and arguably in all Rudkin's work) is a marked reversal of the familiar process in individualist works. In these, obligations and relationships are assumed to prevent the emergence of true, unique Self. Thus, the way to selfhood requires a stripping away of relationship and obligation. In Song of Light, however, as Stephen says, the Self is found through the recognition of the value of the Other and answering their call. In other words, in taking on relationship and obligation.

Stephen's original attempt to discover his "inner self", definition and validation is tautological. Couched in the terms of his social world and its exclusionist morality, he cannot but confirm himself as outcast and in-valid. The question and answer are synonymous. He can only look through the eyes of the world that rejects him. However, momentary validation from Bengry stimulates a sense of independence in Stephen and moves him beyond the artificial confines of island life. Thus, he discovers the Pit and forgets himself in his struggle to save Gower. Although Gower is lost, Stephen emerges into self-hood.

Child Manatond's process is similar. It is not pity that initiates her first responses, but the playful teasing of Michael and Sam. Simple attention stimulates her to participate. She comes out of herself to contact them. The voices become integrated as she reaches out for relationship. In the opening scene in Part Three, Sheila initiates conversation for the first time, thus becoming not only an equal participant but an influence, herself, on Stephen.

Intrinsic to Stephen's self-discovery are commitments to the

Bangrys and Gower. His experience is incomplete until it is shared. He cannot leave the island until he completes his experience in the Pit by passing on his knowledge. His diffidence expresses how difficult he finds this.

STEPHEN: How should you understand? A Pastor's son. While all your eyes is up to Heaven here, what filth's below. Its murky Stephen had the nose for that ...

JOHN: Why me tell? Me, this? Tell it my father.

STEPHEN: Yui ... Yui're of an age wi' me

JOHN: Oh, Age. ⁵³

John has always been distant. Participant but retiring, he's not a typical "heroic" personality or man of action. Except for his lectures on creation, he's also fairly silent. There is a noticeable speech pattern integrated into the action of the play. All the characters, except perhaps the twins, first speak in short, terse, even reluctant, phrases. As knowledge and confidence grow, their speeches become longer, more explicit and elaborate. John, especially for a Bangry, has been particularly unrevealing. Now, however, he shares himself with Stephen at length.

Oh John is safe ... John's no part of the corrupted world. Suppose-no: Stephen, imagine. An Angel sent down into this world, flame, to walk among mankind, a shape of man himself: deluded that he is a man himself. Poor angel, when deep in him the knowledge now begins to rise: he is not man like these; he is here, but only to burn. To touch this world of stone to life by virtue of the fire he is; never for him any partaking in the life he gives. His task, to burn beneath the sky alone for others - wakening. Think, Stephen. That angel might walk this very shore. And if he met with a Stephen on this ocean's edge, Stephen a man, Stephen blood and water milk and clay, might not that angel yearn to give one hundred and ninety nine thousandths of that infinity he is for one day only of being Stephen's clay? That angel might gladly cry 'I give it all' for one short mortal sunrise-to-sunset of being - Of being. ⁵⁴

53. Part III, Act IV, p63

54. Part III, Act IV, p65

In a sense, the speech is a continuance of his previous descriptions of natural forces, this time setting himself in the vast cosmology of time and space. The "Angel" provides a link between the metaphysical pattern and the immediate moment. The term picks up Bengry's "Angels only ... From God" and enforces the suggestions of an over-riding pattern, a "destiny", implying its imminent completion.

Gower, who hadn't even a word for "man" except those describing rank and work, struggling with the differences in their health, functioning and possibilities ("ease"), found a concept which placed him in relative value to Stephen: "Angel". John's casting himself as "angel", however, is blatantly no bid for self-aggrandisement. The emphasis is on role and obligation. The "angel" is a man aware of the pattern and his place in it. His isolation is born of the knowledge that he has a role to fulfil in the service of others. This awareness and acknowledgement of the larger pattern and the acceptance of the responsibility is the defining line between "Man" and "Angel". The very fact that John has communicated this is an indication of his acceptance.

It is also important that Stephen understand. Communication has been at the premium in the play. Here, John exposes his deepest perceptions of himself and Stephen responds, acknowledging the concept by sharing the language.

STEPHEN: There's nothing a Stephen could do. Stephen must go his way.

JOHN: And that's the angel's only joy, that those he touch to life go from him, free.⁵⁵

This trust leads to a gathering of assimilated knowledge.

STEPHEN: I can tell you where there's need of a sermon, John ... Need of an angel go down into a world of stone, touch it to life.

JOHN: Yes Stephen I know. A sermon I dread to give.⁵⁶

The moral necessity of integration that informs the play presents a basic dichotomy between life and death in terms of feeling and lack of feeling, love and wrath, through images related to fire and stone. The use of a consistent cluster of simple images sets up a restricted code which separates those who understand from those who don't. The audience become included in a cohesive system of significances. The conversation between Stephen and John, for example, could never have taken place were they obliged to explain every statement in explicit, factual detail. The use of these simple clusters not only facilitates complex signifying but also influences audience perspective. The audience are drawn into the bonding between Stephen and John.

Child Manston is also profoundly affected. As they come together, so, in a sense, does she. Calling on Michael and Sam, she presents herself to them:

"Sam ... Mike? Who is here? Why, her. Who's her. This lady on the earth." From a "living thing", to "person", to "woman" to "lady", a term of dignity. In the wake, arguably, of John's perception of himself in the cosmos, she places herself firmly and comfortably "living on this earth".

"The King is but crown and robe". The role transcends the man. Wearing them, John is King. Although Holst can tell the difference, the soldiers, for whom the symbol was created, cannot: they see only the robe and crown; the person is irrelevant. Thus, Holst' at

56. Part III, Act IV, p64

tempt to prevent John's usurping the role is foiled by the soldiers for whom the role is the man. Holst is consequently "turned to stone".

In his sermon to the soldiers, John struggles to make distinctions not only between the two Kings but between the two modes of survival: death and life. Distinction, however, is not the soldiers' strong point.

JOHN: Turn yous all to stone.

CHUCK: No sir - we should know him

JOHN: How should you know him?

CHUCK: He would - be - ugly

JOHN: If he came to you ugly, how should he have you love him?⁵⁷

Material, physical signs of value are shifted to criteria of behaviour. Thus, the "ripping" of the robe is more than an arbitrary gesture. It is a physical sign of the "King's" willingness to abnegate the trappings of role.

John's approach to the soldiers is significant. Rather than attempt to explain, he reaches for an image whose visual and metaphoric content and power will affect the soldiers' hearts rather than their intellect. (Arguably, a statement about the aim of the artist/writer himself).

John's sermon brings central elements of the play together. It sets events in a larger context and highlights the fundamental choice between life and death: rejection or acceptance. The soldier visited by the great, frightening white bird who, to his profound regret, denies its call and kills it, is also the story of the islanders who chose "death" in preference to change, ambiguity and "life". It is Nebewold's story, who, having the tools to encourage

57. Part III, Act IV, p67

and enhance life, chose to apply them in the cause of arrogance and repression. It is also Gower's story. The image of the bird suggests the power of the spirit. Thus, fear can kill the spirit and turn us all to "stone". Once the spirit is denied, "the gold that had been his glory weighed him. He was stone." The most viable of values, clutched when no longer informed by spirit (light/life) become the trappings of death.

John promises: "to spend what little last of me is left to drive you all before me, up into the light ... tell the others."⁵⁸

Above ground, the cards are called in. Sister Duinhead, having lit her lamp for the Lord and called him to her bedchamber has been consumed by his burning flame. Though the physical explanation of the lamp overturning settles any argument of irresponsible metaphysics, the experience of her death transcends it. Her call for the wrath and fire of God has been heeded. Even Child Manatond asks, rather wickedly: "Ain taste of the Lord's wrath, was he sweet?"

Scrupulously, each of the leading islanders is given the chance to choose their own fate. Sam's discovery of the lipstick leads him to try to enlighten Sister Duinhead as to the existence of the lost children. Knowledge is offered to her outright, but she rejects it, turning on Sam and accusing him (rather bizarrely) not only of lying but of using the lipstick himself!

SAM: These things is here" Ahn yuis should want to know of them. For yuir own selves sake!

SISTER DUINHEAD: Our selves are in our father's hands! ⁵⁹

Manatond, too, is given the choice - to turn back and respond to his

58. Part III, Act IV, p69

59. Part I, Act III, p56

daughter's love or pursue his mock power in the Pit to his death.

Stephen goes to work with delinquents in Glasgow. "I burn a candle in my head. For your - ministry and everything" and in an unspoken moment, Stephen, who recoiled from Bengry's touch, reaches out to John before he leaves.

Suddenly, wildlife returns to the island:

The rock is alive. Good God. Alive with them.⁶⁰
The heartbeat of the Pit has stopped.⁶¹

The change in the human condition is, inevitably, precipitated and is signified by a change in the natural order. The image of the bird has been sustained from the mention of "the little plane" when the Bengry's arrived until it gathers full resonance in John's speech to the soldiers where it collects resonances from outside texts: the albatross, the orc, Picasso's dove (and Noah's?). With the arrival of the gannets, the metaphor becomes physically manifest and the associations between human, social action and the natural world is completed. As life returns to the island, the mock heartbeat of the Pit ceases. The climax of the action, however is still withheld.

Bengry sits alone: "Christmas, all but sonless. One living frozen tongue of flame", Manatond's pity (and guilt?) has moved him to paint "Rachel weeping for her children" for Bengry as an apology.

I am sorry Pastor. What a stony home to you our island has been. And crueller to your princes of sons. Devouring them ...⁶²

If there were one line to sum up the action of the play, it would be Bengry's reply:

60. Part III, Act IV, p71

61. Part III, Act IV, p72

62. Part III, Act IV, p73

"A seed will split a rock."⁶³

His faith in the over-riding pattern remains unshaken. His compassion extends even to Death and Death's lonely role in the integrated pattern

of

living;

I have still one son, haven't I. To feed this Death? My enemy is no man. Brother. Only this Death ... Think, Brother, what's Death's love for a man? But to come for him, to take him and to leave him ruin in his arms? Poor Death, wouldn't you say? For that to be the only love he knows?⁶⁴

Feeling and relationship remain the necessities for life and meaning.

His last line has the resounding ring of destiny and benediction:

"Last son of light, go down upon your journey now."

The fact that John has already descended the Pit confirms the shared purpose and the inevitability of their journey.

When John takes Child Manatond to witness her father grotesquely struggling toward his vile kingdom, her horror is overcome by love and compassion. She pleads for acknowledgement, offering him the choice between loving relationship and the empty aggrandisement of the kingdom of Death and his own demise.

CM: I dvina see it. A dreim it -

JOHN: Ye see it, Sheila.

CM: Father! Look at me!

KING: Filth off me. No filth out of me! - All stone below, head only is a mahn - Head's a mahn! I am King of Heads.

CM: Father look at me.

KING: Nothing is here. Down, King. Among mine clean sons.⁶⁵

No need to point out the parallels between Bengry's descriptions of his sons and Manatond's "clean sons", nor between the islanders' intolerance of spontaneity and ambiguity and their obsession with the

63. Part III, Act IV, p73

64. Part III, Act IV, p73

65. Part III, Act V, p74

"cleanliness" of order and conformity and isolation. He has made his choice.

In a particularly scrupulous act of preparation, John sets Child Manatond to sleep where she will wake to see the dawn, and then takes leave of his father.

BENGRY: John? What are you looking at, John, so sad?

JOHN: The world

BENGRY: Well, you have see it

(stage directions: John is riven as at last to rail at him, instead going only)⁶⁶

The significance of this meeting is dependent on our participation through the play. However reluctantly, John takes on his role and the accompanying isolation he described to Stephen. Bengry's following speech completes the action, setting the present in a continuum of significance and establishing John's actions as both a completion of the family process, set by their shared perspective and Bengry's stated intent, and the completion of John's own personal proclivities. He describes how, as a child clamouring for a little sister John made

Little heaps of dust clay and leaves, all shapen clumsy like a - child! Tell me father - what must I do now, to have breathe unto this the spirit of life; and make a sister?⁶⁷

The scientists, their skill at analysis and control the very antithesis of living, flee the eruption of life: "What was the original seed of this", and John's voice resounds from the Pit:

Up! up! unto your proper kingdom, who you are! Shine like the Sun! Your Light has come!⁶⁸

The proper kingdom of man is earth. The meek inherit it.

66. Part III, Act V, p76

67. Part III, Act V, p76

68. Part III, Act V, p76

The assumption that power defines Man, that conquest and control through power and wealth invest him with value is in direct contrast to the assumption that Man is the rightful inheritor of a place on earth. Set between the living spirit and the kingdom of death, the structural imagery offers both choice and the terms of that choice.

The use of the sea, for example, is one way the relationship between mankind and the natural world is used to signify the alternative view and values. The term "Deep" invests it with emotional profundity and an association with human feeling that physical terms like "sea" and "water" lack. "Deep" also associates metaphysical concepts of origins and creation.

Sam is given a special relationship with "the deep". His prophetic "I'll go by water when I go" initiates both this relationship and the image of an over-riding destiny that forms the basis of metaphysical content in the action.

SAM: The ocean, father. The many colours of it. And how it eats at the island like a jigsaw ... this could be not an island at all. But Sinbad's whale ... And all the island turn bottom-side up w' us, and plunge to the bed of that deep.⁶⁹

One of the many speeches that suggest both the state of the island and motifs of the "what is up is down" and "turning the world upside down".

The islanders see the sea as their enemy, always threatening to thrust them from safety. Child Manatond associates this fear with fear of the Other:

Dark Mahn, Sheila. Come out of the deep to tempt ye: ugh vomit.

SAM: That's no way to speak to the deep. The deep is lovely. Oh Sister Manatond, repent and be Baptised-just ye walk in

69. Part I, Act I, p15

the fetch of it a step or two, good sister take my hand.⁷⁰

Trust, relationship, love and respect of mankind and nature are delineated through response to the sea. At the end, Child Manatond, in contrast to her previous dread and hatred, offers her love to the deep:

Take me, deep, make me yours, then I am mine. Bring me from me, then I am. I give you me, and I am given me.⁷¹

The natural world participates in the integrating, value-giving structure of relationship. By giving shall one be given, by the offering of Self to the Other, thus shall one receive self.

Child Manatond shows this process in miniature as she steals herself against the wind:

Not's house is this. Huff, wind, puff, blow ma house down ... Wind didn't see me. Wind luiked thru me. No me to see. Hi, not ... This is not. Not. If I is not ... then who is I, not to be ...?⁷²

Mutual acceptance leads to recognition of self, a self not defined by conflict or power but by that same mutual acknowledgement.

CHILD MANATOND

Child Manatond reflects the state of the general condition. She stands as an example of the relationship between the whole and its parts, illustrating the affect of one upon the other. On several counts, she is the personification of the concept of integration and its process.

At the beginning, she is undefinable, even to the audience. The islanders make no reference to her, signalling her insignifi-

70. Part II, Act II, p20

71. Part III, Act V, p78

72. Part III, Act IV, p70

cance. Discovered by Michael and Sam, she is subsequently elevated by them from "thing" to "Human" because she cries. From this point, she becomes the personalised image of the state of the island.

MIKE: Mahn as well?

SAM: Make up yuir mind

MIKE: An uncertain person, John, All voices mixed in the poor head. Like him who said "My name is Legion for I is many", Five or six souls, in one poor shell of mortal clay.⁷³

The Biblical reference establishes both the metaphoric implications and the metaphysical context at the source of the reference. John's wry retort momentarily projects the action forward:

"Well, that'll take some sortin' out in the Resurrection, wont it".

The Biblical reference is a perfect expression of the fundamental principles of integration: the one representing the many. It is sustained for reinforcement:

Hi Michael.

Hi Sam. Legion.

Legion.

How's all of you?⁷⁴

Child Manatond's language, released from literal logic and syntax by her psychological state, serves to crystallise interlocking references and functions as one of the main sources for developing the metaphoric context of the micro/macroc cosmic relationships.

Stone breast. Stone Thigh. Stone head, stone heart. Stone eye ... Whair's finger's o' men, shall piace these out, to mak a picture of mine-self?⁷⁵

When Stephen leaves, she acidly states: "Ahv'e eaten him" (the island). In keeping with the mystique of schizophrenia, she sees beyond

73. Part I, Act I, p9

74. Part I, Act II, p26

75. Part I, Act II, p29

the surface to the underlying "truth". It is Child Manatond who recognises the Bengry's and sets the terms:

Whui is these like stars appearen? Shaik-Et. Maik-Et ahn
Tui-Said-Ye-Go ... Until mine fiery furnace ... Great white
machanacal baird. Eggs shallnae hatch. Heir's stony
ground.⁷⁶

Within the same tradition, she is allowed a choric, prophetic position, feeding a sense of prescribed, over-riding necessity into the action.

Her psychological state and the form of her language make it clear that these are a series of associations with the island and not self-conscious personal projections. As she comes into integrated consciousness and experiences a sense of herself as a sentient being in active relationship to the cosmos, her speech, too becomes more fluent and more personally directed.

Child Manatond's awakening is both simultaneous and synonymous with the soldiers' rise from the Pit into the light. The effect and significance of this ending are entirely dependent on the activation of the fundamental principles of integration being made viable through the action of the play.

John your son has brought the tower of death to dust. I come
to thank you for him; and for his young brothers, too, who
have been-more than sons -

What is this I am ... Flesh? hand? Breast? What is this cold
at my feet ... yet where it touches, warming me ... Take me
Deep ...

Oh, I was asleep. And dreamed. Three stars of light came
down a while and danced among these stones. Oh brightest and
best of all the morning's sons, was I asleep? and did you
waken - me?⁷⁷

76. Part I, Act I, p6

77. Part III, Act V, p78

It is the voice not only of Sheila Manatond, but of the island itself, and, by implication, of humanity as a whole.

Rudkin, himself, has "turned this painted tabernacle upside down". Exchanging the central justification of the sanctity of individual uniqueness for that of integral value and relationship, he tips the personalised system over to expose the hidden hierarchy that supports its few idealised examples.

Individualism is proposed to be the privilege of the few sustained through the oppression of the many. The individualist ideal is judged by its consequences. The high Grid majority on whom the freedom of the few depends, while upholding the system, find themselves debased and devalued by it. Their world view is constructed to mask their lack of power, their insignificance and their dependence and to perpetuate their oppression. Even by the principles of individualism, the structure necessary to support the ideal is offensive and immoral, and produces stagnation rather than growth.

Through the exposure of the consequences of individualism in its materialist capitalist guise by confronting it with a traditionally based, working concept of integration, the play endeavours to turn the audience from automatic acceptance of the standards of wealth and personal, isolated advancement to the basic moral tenets of relationship and integration.

The criticism that the play is idealistic is only relevant if one expects literature and drama to offer text books for activity. The structure addresses the basic underlying principles of individualism by confronting them with their opposite thus revealing the extremities of their consequences. The structure and imagery present a viable alternative in the creation of significance and meaning in

an attempt to affiliate audience experience with an active confirmation of the value of inheritance, relationship and responsibility to humanity and the earth. The play is a proposal for the creation of an alternative moral structure based on the fundamental principles of integration - Group membership in the living experience of creation; Grid, obligation toward the well-being of all elements of creation - a parable of possibility.

THE PLAYS OF STEVEN BERKOFF

The emergence of Tragedy in contemporary theatre suggests that the underlying Personalised reality system is no longer absolute and the viability of Integration is becoming conceivable. Arguably, one could not conduct a study like this if that were not the case!

Since the only shared precept in Personalisation is individual uniqueness, its cultural artifacts will, of necessity, display a variety of styles and appearances. Thus, any insistence on formal elements as definitions of genre or value - blank verse, five acts, the use of chorus, for example, all arguably expressions of the deeper assumptions of their times - though it may distinguish modes of expression will ignore function and essence.

Responses to Steven Berkoff's plays, for example, veer from overwhelming rejection to near deification. Negative criticism is usually based on the artifacts of style: violent language, aggressive action, even the sacrilege of his uncultured characters speaking in "elevated" terms. Although the power of the plays is rarely disputed, there is little attempt to consider the function of these stylistic elements in the functioning of the works. The anomalies in their reception suggest one might be able to consider the plays fruitfully through the Douglas model, especially since conventional dramatic criticism has not yielded much.

A. THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER¹

Many writers have "dramatised" Poe's story. The conventional approach is to transfer the narrative to the stage in dialogue,

1. Text quotations: Berkoff, Steven, The Fall of the House of Usher. East. Playscript 78, John Calder, London 1977

producing a physical enactment of the storyline. The effect is to give the audience an accurate illustration of the events of the plot.

Berkoff's approach is significantly different. Electing for a complete change of form, he transforms the story into a non-literal experience in which image replaces literary narrative. The play is constructed of a series of small scenes each of which presents an image which takes the forefront of the action. Even Poe's own words are put to the service of image.

This dependence on image, itself, suggests a working concept of integration. As a communication tool, an image unites apparently isolated elements into a pictorial whole. Significance is created through context and interaction. Meaning, so to speak, is transmitted not through explanation, elaboration or direct association, but through relationship. Based on relationship rather than distinction, the image functions as a Restricted code.

Image, however, like any restricted code, can only work in a context of shared understanding. Thus, the emphasis on the use of image as a primary signifying device assumes the possibility of communication as well as a system of shared references and values with the audience.

Berkoff provides the central images, supporting and extending them and their implications through available stage language and trusts their resonances and import will be comprehended and extended by the audience. Both Berkoff and his audience, then, share the act of "meaning making". The use of image as primary signifying unit also transfers the problem of narrative development to the audience. The story is not overtly "told" but implied.

One could see the single narrative line as a kind of "individual", especially when the story is written in the first person and

everything is seen through the narrator's eyes. The transfer from literary narrative to active imagery, where a condensation of significances requires a final act of synthesis to be completed by the audience, suggests an active experience of integration. The audience fills in the narrative line (the horizontal plane) while at the same time building a depth of cohesion from the inter-active signifiers (the vertical plane), thus forming both content and context at the same time. This process is most simply exemplified by Berkoff's use of mime. For example, the audience read in the physical presence of the house and the fact that Edgar is being shown round it - "step by step we will conduct you" - as Madeline and Usher mime the doors, stairs, endless corridors, innumerable rooms, as well as the implications: Edgar entering their lives, their psyches, their story, his envelopment by the "House of Usher", its history and demands.

Structurally, the play sets a simple dichotomy between the individualist interpretation of reality through scientific materialist analysis and the inter-active signifying of integrative inclusion, often placing them simultaneously on opposite sides of the stage. The overt question - How is meaning made? - thus inextricably links form and content.

The drama begins with an image Berkoff calls "The Coda" of the play.² Madeline is in her coffin. The doctor walks across the stage towards her. As he reaches her, she screams. This image is taken from the centre of the chronological narrative. Its presence at the start of the play implies a hierarchy of meaning where the part can stand for the whole (in contrast to the straight narrative line dependent on linear causation). The image of Madeline alive in the

2. Scene 1, p86

tomb informs the subsequent action; both cause and effect, it establishes the context.

Madeline and Usher are the crystallisation of a complex series of inter-relationships formed through personal and historical tradition and creating a cycle which is nearing its completion. We meet them as they await their prescribed end. Twins, they are nearly one person: they finish each others' sentences, share each others' blood--both figuratively and literally. They are the summation of their family's history and meaning: "The House of Usher". Last of the Ushers, inheritor of the Usher characteristics in extremis, Usher takes on the form and substance of the building itself before our eyes. The vampirish relationship between Madeline and Usher impels the inexorable drive to the conclusion where her death, by definition, necessitates his death, the end of the line, and the disintegration of the house.

The purpose of Edgar, the friend, is to make sense of the events he witnesses. He arrives confident of his personal, logical process of assessment; however, he turns out to be pathetically ill equipped. His clear, rational logic cannot give credence to, let alone unravel, the complex intersignificances. He cannot even credit the primary premise that prescribes their inevitability and creates their relevance: membership and obligation to family history and tradition. Through the meeting of two immutable reality systems, the play elaborates assumptions about knowledge, understanding and the making of meaning.

Through Edgar, the limits set by implicit assumptions about the nature of reality are actualised. Edgar's incomprehension allows the audience entry into a complex system of non-verbal communication. While exposing the weaknesses of elaborative, linear logic, it en-

courages the audience's ability to read significance through the restricted code of imagery and association.

For the Ushers, Edgar's arrival quickens the inevitable: that is why they invited him! For Edgar, it is an experience "undreamt of by his philosophy". A "pragmatist", when Edgar believes it, he'll see it, but events at the Ushers can make no sense unless they are viewed in the larger context where the parts of the whole indelibly affect each other. To perceive the meaning of events, Edgar would have to acknowledge Usher's meaning-making context. Edgar, however, sees Usher as an isolated individual and is constantly giving him advice on how to save himself, admonishments which echo hollow against the complexity and inexorability of the larger cycles by which Usher claims his worth.

The two parties often simultaneously express their opposing responses. For example:

USHER: Besides I am attached to this house. The gray stones live ... Not just the fungi that over-spread them. Not just the dark waters of the tarn ... the result is discoverable in that silent yet terrible influence of the House which has made me what I am.

EDGAR: (at the same time) I look on him with horror. He has altered beyond belief ... Ghastly palour of the skin. You have altered beyond belief. {To which USHER eventually replies: we all change a little}

Usher stresses interdependence and inter-active influence, defining himself and his meaning by his relationship with the environment and the house. Edgar concentrates on appearance. When Edgar advises: "You must leave this house", Usher replies:

How can I? These walls are my skin. This room is my heart. Besides, I have a sister.

-
3. Scene 15, p111
4. Scene 16, p113

Even Edgar's description of his own state of mind has a cold, detached quality almost clinical in its dedication to objective elaboration:

I feel an utter depression of soul
Which I can compare to no earthly
Sensation more properly than to the after dream
Of a reveller upon opium.⁵

He reveals no more than that he feels like he's in a dream: in other words, the situation seems "unreal", a comparison with an assumed "reality" and a vague suggestion of the speaker's personal detachment. All told, he's said little more than these are the sorts of happenings that do not occur in the world as he perceives it.

Compare the Ushers' simultaneous description of their own states:

Yes we are here	Sickness
We have not crumbled	Torture
Perfect in our adaptation	Soul
Of Parts	Melancholy ⁶

Usher's "descriptions" of his state come in sudden outbursts, active expressions of his inclusion in a larger, inter-effective process, not only the microcosm of his family history but also the macro-pattern which encompasses it, the great cycle of Nature, death and rebirth, eventually manifested in Madeline's rising from the tomb.

I shall perish
Thus, thus and not otherwise
I feel that the moment will
Sooner or later arrive when I
I must abandon life and reason together
In some struggle with the grim phantasm
FEAR⁷

-
5. Scene 9, pl01
6. Scene 9, pl01
7. Scene 16, pl13

Despite his knowledge that Life is circumscribed by Death and his understanding of its meaning beyond his immediate life, Usher is gripped by the primeval fear of Death. The event is permeated with the sense of inevitability, a Destiny formed in the dark, distant past which both creates the pattern and gives it significance beyond the fact of mortality. It is the end of a cycle - personal, historical, natural and metaphysical.

Later, Edgar opens a book in the library, The Fall of the House of Usher. He reads the beginning of the story, compounding the cyclical pattern and suggesting further levels of metaphoric patterning.

The differences between the two reality structures and their consequent meaning-making focusses can, perhaps, most easily be seen when the same words are spoken by each set of characters, especially since the words are taken directly from Poe's story.

Edgar's first words are the opening lines of the story. In the story, they set the scene and a perspective. In the play, Edgar delivers them as a single speech. However, the scene has already been set. We have already spent three scenes in the presence of the Ushers. Thus, the words do not provide an entrance into the situation, as they do in the story but a) introduce us to Edgar, and b) create an alternative perspective to the Ushers'. The speech follows Ushers' transformation as the House. In comparison, Edgar's speech comes over as cold, detached and clinically descriptive. It is over-elaborative in the effort to be accurate.

A dull and soundless day
In the autumn of the year
The clouds hang oppressively low in the heavens
I have been passing alone
On horseback through
Singularly dreary tracts of country.
Now, as the shades of evening draw on

I find myself within view of the melancholy
House of Usher.⁸

Later, in scene 7, Madeline and Usher repeat the exact words:

USHER: Its dull today
MADELINE: Dark
USHER: So silent and still
MADELINE: The clouds hang oppressively low
USHER: It is the autumn of the year.⁹

The conversational form naturalises the information, giving it a human context. The simple observations, separated and placed in sequence, inform on each other creating a signifying relationship between them and a unified context. The "dull and soundless day in the autumn of the year" with "the clouds hanging oppressively low" etc, which to Edgar are, first, a statement of fact, and, second, signs of uniqueness and "unnaturalness" are presented here as a series of inter-related qualities in a natural, recognisable cycle. The parts speak of the whole. Thus, it is dull and dark, even silent and still, probably because the clouds are low; after all, it is autumn.

While Edgar presents each element separately and sees each as an indication of the unusual and ominous, Usher and Madeline offer the same information as signs of a normal and inevitable cycle. The context of the larger whole gives the parts meaning.

In the same way, the actual facts of the event are rationally, logically, literally impossible and have no explanation in terms of the rational, analytic cause and effect system of scientific materialism, except, as Edgar insists, to isolate them as unique, remarkable and beyond "reality". Only in relation to the larger pattern - the inherited history of the Usher dynasty and the inexora-

8. Scene 4, p89

9. Scene 7, p95

ble cycles of Nature - do they make sense.

Edgar finds significance only in the uniqueness of events, their deviation from the norm. To the Ushers -and the audience - they offer a paradigm of the meaning-making power of inter-active association and pattern.

Edgar's suggestions appear feeble in comparison with the weighty necessity that propels the action. He is unable to comprehend this drive towards completion or its recognition and acceptance of pattern and inevitability. His descriptions of Usher - "the mental disorder of my friend" - offer little insight into either the man or the situation. Rather, they prevent comprehension, detaching the parts and preventing recognition of their inchoate inter-dependence. For example:

Thinking that a mere different arrangement of the picture would be sufficient to modify or perhaps annihilate the capacity for sorrowful information ...¹⁰

Edgar has entirely missed the point. He tries to rearrange the order of things, isolating the parts, but the particular arrangement is irrelevant. Despite the arrangement, the parts inevitably speak of the greater whole. The "impression" remains the same. Thus, Usher does not really mind how they pass the time: all things speak of the inevitable pattern whose ending they await.

Usher's end is prescribed. There is no alternative. The issue is how one perceives its significance - as an inexplicable "tragic" waste, or as a fitting and meaningful completion of a signifying cycle played over generations and confirming the ultimate fit between the individual parts and the enriching whole. Last of his line, tortured by the extremity of inherited sensitivity, Usher faces

10. Scene 9, p101

the end of the cycle which will ensure the value and purpose of his life. His death is its closure, completing its form and investing his existence with meaning. He anticipates it and fears it. Several times, he attempts to hurry the inevitable end. He invites Edgar to the House to speed up the action; he closes Madeline in the tomb. Waiting for the inevitable is difficult.

Edgar concentrates on trying to take Usher's mind off his grief by reading to him. His practical approach, taking the incident out of context, prevents him from reading what is going on. He cannot read Usher's behaviour or recognise the sound of Madeline banging on the tomb. The audience, however, are in a position to synthesise. Edgar's dogged rationality presents the audience with an experiential choice.

The rational logic of individualist materialism assumes meaning is found through isolation, dissection, categorisation and detachment. "Knowledge" is seen as a collection of information which increases the value of the knower, a possession. The assumption that significance is found through inter-action and association produces a complex meaning system which implicates the interpreter. Its offer of resonance and revelation through association implies the dangers of involvement, consequence and even the acceptance of incomprehension.

Poe's story, told through Edgar's eyes, tends to align us with Edgar. We see the Usher's tale as an appalling exception and view it with horror and dis-ease. Berkoff's play, concentrated in images, tends to align us with Usher and leads us to accept the larger context which makes his story resonant. Edgar's inability to understand stimulates our ability to find significance through association. The loss of the Ushers is also the loss of significance and meaning beyond surface definition.

The case of the Ushers is certainly extreme. We cannot really identify with them. Nor can we give wholesale identification to Edgar who is always outside events and one step behind us. His attempts to rationalise through analysis, practical solutions and descriptions stimulate our own need to comprehend. Thus, the audience are allowed the frisson of an experience beyond logical analysis, a confirmation that "there are more things on heaven and earth" and that they have meaning.

With the demise of the Ushers and the collapse of the house, the rich source of inter-active meaning where traditional associations form, oblige and give significant context to the specific example diss. We are left with Edgar's meagre attempts to make sense of it all. In the face of the multi-signifying context of the Ushers, in which the power of the whole is proved by the experience of the part, the glories of reason and distinction are tarnished and paltry. Edgar's elaborative language is clumsy and seems to divest the experience of meaning rather than enhance it.

To make sense of the story, one has to acknowledge the concept and process of integration. Usher is himself and Madeline, the family and the house: the part stands for, acts for, and gains significance through its relationship to the other parts and the encompassing whole. Beyond even the family line, the larger pattern of Nature imbues the story of the Ushers with resonance and meaning.

The play offers an experience of the metaphysical, the intangible and powerful forces beyond the control of man, whose force and pattern give the smallest and most bizarre occurrences value and meaning. Through this process, it exposes the underlying cosmological assumptions regarding understanding, knowledge and the making of

meaning, holding them up for question.

B. GREEK¹¹

Greek is a journey. The basic story is a common individualist tale: the young man on the make. Eddy, an inconsequential working class lad, leaves home to seek his fortune. However, instead of finding the world around him available fodder for his acquisition of wealth and worth, Eddy finds the very context, assumptions and terminology make such effort meaningless. The terms of success ironically imply the valuelessness of that success. Thus, his quest takes an opposing form to the familiar picaresque/Horatio Alger tradition. Instead of gaining proof of the unique value of Self through acquiring material gains and social position, confirmed through "luck", Eddy finds the necessity to acknowledge his relationship and responsibility as part and production of the world around him, directed by Destiny. To achieve his goals and ideals, he must change his world.

Eddy's active moral commitment brings him to the brink, a realisation that the conventional moral base that justifies the social structure is no longer conducive to positive, viable action. At the end of this journey, Eddy confronts the necessity to reassess the unquestioned, traditional moral basis of society in terms of an alternative moral/social code. In deconstructing the play, then, we are proceeding towards the moment when the audience not only acknowledge but accept this necessity and its terms as viable, if not imminent. What are these terms, and by what process do they become manifest?

11. Text quotations: Berkoff, Steven, Greek. Decadence and Other Plays. Faber and Faber, London, 1990

THE HERO

"So". 12

The play begins with Eddy alone onstage. One man alone onstage is an undiluted image of individualism (One notes that of all Shakespeare's plays only one begins this way - the main character alone onstage speaking to the audience - RICHARD III).

"So" implies a continuing conversation with the audience. The direct address implies their participation, if not collaboration, within a time continuum. Eddy's next line, however, sets up an inherent contradiction.

I was spawned in Tufnell Park

The special "I" suggests the significant beginning of a unique story, complimenting the image of the isolate, unique individual. "Spawned", however presents an image of the mass where the individual is totally irrelevant. "Spawned" suggests membership of an impersonal, faceless multitude, transforming the warmth and significance of unique, human birth into the cold, one-amongst-many reproduction of fish. Arguably, "spawned" presents the collective from the individualist perspective.

The contrast between the visual and verbal images, too, suggests a conflict in the central moral focus: the individual vs. the mass. The question is raised: what is the relationship between the individual self and the social conglomerate? There is also a further suggestion of causal relationship: the individual-centred world leading to a world of faceless pawns, each-man-for-himself having become each-man-against-the-other. This uneasy individualist perspective in the first lines implies a conflict which evolves into

12. Act I, Scene 1, p145

an active confrontation between the two alternative reality systems in the terms of social morality.

Eddy proceeds to describe the world around him, building a recognisable, coherent, though arguably selective, picture of the social context. He remains partially outside by dint of his observational, critical stand, and partially implicated through his membership. Formally, this ambivalence is manifested through Eddy's position in the drama as both narrator and participant. In this sense, the action of the play, personified by Eddy, can be seen as the process of synthesising the dichotomy between the image of Man as part of the mass and Man as a singular individual through responsible social engagement whereby the individual becomes a significant, effective part of the interactive whole.

The verbal imagery through which Eddy constructs his environment engages the audience through imaginative actualisation. The extremity of the picture, the process of selection and the vividness of description highlight violence and lethargy while conscientiously excluding mitigating circumstances. The choice of similar expressions give the speech energy, humour and purpose, intent and pattern. At the very least, they direct the audience towards personal engagement and a moral perspective. For example, the prevalence of terms of excrement suggest a world in filth and ruin:

a monkey's fart from tottenham
a bolt of phlegm from stamford hill
a cess pit
a scum hole¹³

The specific examples Eddy isolates together with the terms he uses to describe them create both specific pictures and an attitude towards

13. Act I, scene 1, p145

them. Dirt, mostly personal, highlights the lack of care towards self and others, projecting the image of an environment which is the product of indolence, self-interest, hopelessness and fear.

Constant emphasis on the ugly, degenerating and unhealthy actively implies their opposite. That is, if you have no concept of health, "unhealthy" is not a viable concept. The constant emphasis on the same critical elements implies a working concept of an alternative, its desirability and viability.

slaggy Christmas party, boozy old relatives in marks and sparks cardigans ... who stand all year doing as little as they can while they had one hand in the bosses till and the other scratching their balls ...¹⁴

Like fish spawned impersonally in the cold and dismal deep, the inhabitants of this world seem to have no obligations, no ties, no commitments; no sense of belonging. No one is noticed or needed. There is no direction save self-gratification. There are no external standards. The product; filth, mediocrity, isolation, and violence: the plague. Lack of care and commitment have produced lack of meaning.

The wealth of examples coupled with the behaviour and response of Eddy's parents suggest that, on the whole, the participants of this society accept the status quo as "natural", an inevitable state of affairs. Eddy's critical insistence and emphasis on negative result, pinpoints his apparently unique inability to accept the "normality" of the condition and suggests he envisions an alternative. The choice of language and example does more than express Eddy's disgust, it isolates a pattern and sets the action in a moral context.

14. Act I, scene 1, p145

(One might suggest to the spectator revulsed by the language and violent examples Eddy presents that their reaction is not so much proof of the superiority of their sensibilities over Berkoff's but a specific and prescribed response to a construction intentionally contrived to arouse the spectator's sensibilities and direct them away from casual acceptance of the status quo towards commitment to the necessity of a viable alternative.)

rage at the blacks, envying their cocks, loath the yids, envying their gelt ... hate everything that walks under 30 and falls asleep in front of the telly¹⁵

In pub and home, in street and cafe, loneliness, resentment and loss reign, instigating a terrible last-ditch attack of violence to gain personal value by devaluing others. The one shared goal is the necessity to gain personal worth by denigrating others.

The individual, so treasured in theory, in practice is isolated and debased, forced to fight for preservation of self both physical and psychic. The most destructive characteristics are the most active. Fear, hatred, greed and envy expressed through physical and sexual violence, create a majority of smouldering passivity. Calloused indifference is mirrored in the isolation and lack of commitment of its members.

Eddy's focus on the same patterns in individuals, places of congregation, and the social environment assumes an integrated relationship between microcosm and macrocosm. His own home, a microcosm of the rubbish-filled streets, each member of the family engaged in a singular, personal unproductive activity (his sister squeezing black-heads; his mother at bingo; his father, flies undone, face sagging, egg on his clothes) is merely a smaller version of the surrounding

15. Act I, scene 1, p145

pattern.

By isolating and highlighting the pattern while denying both implicitly and explicitly justifying individual detail, Eddy both underlines his inability to take the situation for granted and implies an alternative perspective. In the run of things, each example might be assumed to be separate and independent - what has the pub owner's dog got to do with the worker with his hand in the till? The juxtaposition of examples plus the absence of mitigating or justifying detail accentuate similarities of pattern and result implying a social rather than personal state of affairs.

Simultaneously, incidental references within the larger tirade present glimpses of alternative standards suggesting Eddy's critical stance is founded in a coherent opposing vision. The wine bar whose purity is mirrored in the cleanliness and beauty of "his girl", his comment that his home is "not like a xen temple" - both refer to the natural and metaphysical. The temple itself is an image of completeness, a unity of body and spirit, its "cleanliness and purity" a reflection of an inner state.

Thus, a moral, structural dilemma and the terms and images for its discussion are set from the beginning of the play. A pattern of decay and violence, the consequence of the drive to acquire self-aggrandisement prescribed by the individualist ethos is set up as antipathetic to healthy human existence.

The structure of Eddy's monologue, itself, implies a micro-cosmic/macrocosmic series of reflections. From the "I" of the opening, he moves to a general view of the social context. He then describes his home, emphasising the same negligence and decay and implying preferable images. Finally, he hones in on the particular incident, his father's revelation of the Gypsy's prophecy, describing

his father, too, in the same terms as the social context.

The scene with the Gypsy extends the context of the play beyond the social construct. The prophecy superimposes an alternative pattern on this present-orientated world by imposing necessities of both past and future, setting the action in a metaphysical context. An extended pattern of meaning, larger than the immediate life of the individual, is imposed from outside carrying with it values and standards external to personal gain and desire. Its validity and power are confirmed through association and repetition.

Although the father's justification for seeing the Gypsy is predictably pleasure seeking - "a bit of a giggle .. bit of a thrill .. " the credibility of the inexorable pattern of the prophecy is suggested by the Gypsy's behaviour. His horror at the fate of another and his refusal of payment both run contrary to the values of the society, making him exceptional and giving his words power.

The inexorability of the pattern is reinforced through repetition of the event: the prophecy confirmed by the son who has inherited his fathers gift. Time is condensed:

The years they shrank away ... and time and space faded away/we seemed then to have hurled back those 15 years.¹⁶

The laws by which this external, impersonal pattern functions are unaffected by Time, personal action or human will. Distinctions become insignificant. Despite the dictates of society or human reason, absolutes beyond the life of the single person are effectively at work. The Gypsy's inheritance of role and vision from his father in association with Eddy and his father also neatly links the issue of "inheritance" with Destiny.

16. Act I, scene 2, p149

The visit to the Gypsy activates the concept of integration by imposing an interactive metaphysical context and suggesting one of the expressions of this pattern is inheritance. The Gypsy's story also provides another referential context. The mere mention of killing one's father and marrying one's mother calls up the unmistakable plotline of Oedipus, setting another parallel in motion.

The references to Oedipus are proposed through incident and are notably overt. That is, the basic plotting material of Greek calls up the basic plot of Oedipus. The reference is so obviously set and so persistently active, it cannot be dismissed as merely a self-conscious attempt to gain generalised significance from a recognised classic. Although the context, terms, structure, and perspectives of the two plays are different, the shared incidents create a metaphoric association. Every fundamental turn of plot in Greek calls up the parallel incident in Oedipus, engendering a signifying comparison. Oedipus forms part of the system of meaning in Greek: the differences within the incidental similarities form part of the signifying reference. The linking with Oedipus also sets up a system of expectations based on general knowledge of Oedipus' plotline: the sphynx, the oracle, the plague, putting out one's eyes, and, of course, killing your father and marrying your mother. This inter-active field of reference also forms a comparative moral context for the action.

The correlation formed by the plotline is supported through linguistic references to Oedipus as well as to Greek culture in general forming a metaphoric reference which extends the context of the action in Greek. "Greek", in general, comes to refer, first to literary tradition, and by extension to "tradition" on a social/moral continuum, perpetual images and moral assumptions. So, for example, while the community-centred context for Oedipus's story serves as an

alternative to the isolating individualist context of Eddy's world, the thoughtless insistence on "traditional" morality by rote (for which Oedipus' story also stands) is called into question.

The apparently single narrative, then, is actually a double-line, two stories sharing the same plot. At each plot juncture, Greek calls up Oedipus to extend its own context. This bid for significance through association, itself, is a claim for significance through relationship, a basic premise of integration.

Thus far we can see that the vision of an alternative reality structure is not, in Greek, as it is, say, in Song of Light, so much an a priori assumption forming the entire concept of the play as a concept that evolves as the action progresses. It begins as a critical response to the status quo. Implications of an alternative reality system gradually emerge through the action of the play, their necessity and viability eventually becoming manifest.

Clearly, one single observation or suggestion does not qualify as evidence of any particular cosmological vision. Whatever the work's perspective, the informing precepts will be repeated and supported consistently. Eddy's decision to leave home, for example, rests on both integrated and personalised justifications: his father's fears and Eddy's own "excuse to leave". Predictably, the world he walks into is merely a larger, more dangerous version of his own community and home. The microcosm reflects the macrocosm.

uncollected garbage everywhere
transport sits idly at the docks where workers slink around
rusting cars lay swelling up our streets
the country's in a state of plague.¹⁷

Neglect and disorder reign in a country divided against itself.

17. Act I, scene 3, p152

Everywhere he looks, individuals are pitted against each other in a death grip.

parties of all shades battle for power ... violence to put an end to violence ... anyone who wants to kill maim and destroy/arson, murder and hack are being recruited for a new revolutionary party.¹⁸

the shit has hit the fan as if from a great height ... when what do I espy but fuck and shit maddougal and his paddies from ... Belfast and raring to blow up everything that moves ...¹⁹

Eddy's selective observations pinpoint the process by which the individualist society is being destroyed by its own practice. Eventually, any unity in the social fabric will be destroyed by the necessity of each man to prove himself by disproving the other.

Since a hierarchy of values is not only unacknowledged but actually denied by the informing precept of individualism, the majority are left in an ambiguous, if not "alienated" position. Their freedom of movement and any process by which they might impose their value on the world is restricted, if not denied. One consequence is the uncomprehending descent of the majority into a position of generalized high Grid where the pressure of the nameless hierarchy, the formless all-powerful "they", becomes the malevolent cause of one's loss of worth. Eddy's parents share this position with Willy Loman.

Another result is the formation of factions: attempts to collect worth and impose one's importance on others by creating small, tenuous groups from which one gleams validation for actions designed to impose the fact, value and superiority of one's existence on the majority: terrorism. Society thus becomes fragmented into

18. Act I, scene 3, p152

19. Act I, scene 4, p153

violent units identified through common hatred. In this way, self-definition, pride and self-esteem are built at each others' expense.

Love-making, too, has become violent, selfish and obscene. Relationships are models of self-aggrandisement; sexual terms are used to describe greed and violence. The world Eddy presents is divided into aggressors and oppressed: each-man-for-himself surrounded by potential enemies. The selection of violent example, the language of filth and excrement, together with occasional hints of preferable alternatives compound the critical perspective and imply a viable, more valuable social/moral organisation. Gradually, the fundamental terms of this alternative emerge and accumulate moral content, a set of principles forming a proposed structure. The rats, for example, working together, in contrast to the *ad hoc*, self-directed chaos around them

They join forces to make all resistance impossible seeing how all resistance is locked in internecine strife.²⁰

present an example of community and accomplishment through cooperation. They also support the focus Eddy places on the effects of violence and disorder, the suffering of the victims.

Eddy's emphasis on the recipients of actions rather than the motive, intent, or success of the enactor's accomplishment changes the relevance of the deeds. Foregrounding the needless suffering of the victims denies the individualist justification of the deed as a projection of personal expression or will and its assessment by success. Again, specific justifying details are eliminated, highlighting pattern and implying that actions be assessed not by personal motive or achievement but by their effect on the general good.

20. Act I, scene 3, p153

The growing image of mutual suffering implies a basis for a definite moral system founded on a simple dichotomy: Good is that which benefits; Evil, that which harms.

The concept implies that all Life, by definition, is inter-related, that every individual has a *de facto* responsibility for others. Dismissing mitigating details, Eddy lumps all destructive actions together as violent bids for self-promotion and minimises them in relation to the pain and destruction they cause. By replacing individualist criteria of motive and success with integrated principles of inter-relationship and effect, he redefines the criteria for "success" itself. A set of moral precepts is proposed which both makes the present situation untenable and offers a viable alternative.

raring to blow up anything that moves ... ready to blow some mothers' sons' head off ... knock off some chick who God forbid could be some sweet of mine ... ²¹

how many mothers daughters ... how many mothers douse the graves of kids of 18/wives and widows chatting to a piece of earth²²

i'm human like us all/we're all the same linked/if you kick one his scream will hit my ears and hurt my mind to think of some poor cunt in schtuk²³

The emphasis on role compounds the centrality of relationship. "Mother", "son", "daughter", "widow" both personalise the violence and stress inter-personal dependence. This inter-dependence is extended and given emotional content by Eddy's relating the suffering of strangers to himself.

The language simultaneously creates a broad picture of the

21. Act I, scene 4, p154/5

22. Act I, scene 4, p155

23. Act I, scene 4, p155/6

whole and isolates the specific example. Each example adds to the picture of the whole. The specificity of the references, coupled with the crude directness of the language, prevents the examples becoming generalised, sentimental clichés ("all men are brothers") or taking on clinical impersonality. They have the detailed immediacy of genuine responses triggered by a perspective at odds with the norm and implicitly insist that the well-being of each depends on the well-being of all: that individual and social health are inextricably linked, the internal and external man are commensurate, and viability is dependent on the recognition and activation of mutual benefit. (It is difficult to credit the criticism that Berkoff's language is an incitement to violence and arbitrarily aggressive. Not only does the construction itself elaborate the anguish of effect over the glory of deed, but the use of language increasingly clarifies a fundamental moral model based on the individual's responsibility to an inter-dependent whole.)

Self-generating and inherited, the plague is exacerbated by the ancient, traditional cycle of revenge:

MY FUCKING HUSBAND'S LYING ACROSS THE ROAD/HIS LEGS ON ONE
SIDE HIS TORSO ON THE OTHER, OH GOD HELP ME, OH MAGGOT
SCRATCHER HANG THE CUNTS/HANG THEM SLOW AND LET ME TAKE A
SEWER AND JAB THEIR EYES OUT/LOVELY/GREEK STYLE...
Hanging's no answer to the plague, madam/you'd be hanging
every day²⁴

The exception has become the norm, a closed circuit. Both product and producer, the social plague is the consequence of self-absorption and insulation. Separation generates lack of concern, greed, and self-promotion through neglect and harm of others. The irony of individualism is that it leads to, even depends on, the devaluation of the

24. Act I, scene 4, p155

person. Personal justification is isolated to serve a double function.

still you can't help it/you're drowned in aggro since a kid
and dad has fed between your flappy lugs not love but
hate/has fed the history of ye old past to give you
causes/something to do at night/has woven a tapestry of woe
inflicted on him from the distant foggy patch called past.²⁵

On the one hand, the justification of personal psychological trauma rings hollow in the light of the monstrous violence it begets. On the other, the speech sets the present action in a context, a continuum of violence passed on from generation to generation ("Greek style") justified by almost forgotten deeds, weaving a "tapestry of woe". Again, the specific details of doer and deed are minimised, emphasising effect and creating an image of an increasing spiral, the deeds of the past multiplying through time to create the present chaos of violence and suffering.

By the time Eddy gets to the airport (automatic beginning of the modern journey) the moral and justifying terms of the social context and Eddy's relation to them have been clearly set. His decision -

"to stay and see my own sweet land/amend the woes of my own
fair state ..."²⁶

is both commensurate with Eddy's progress and remarkable. The integrated perspective implicit in his colourful description is now activated. The choice is remarkable in the light of both literary and modern motivational assumptions. Eddy, after all, is merely an ordinary man. He has no remarkable character traits, and he is under no obligation to his society. It is not his responsibility to look

25. Act I, scene 4, p156

26. Act 1, scene 4, p157

after it, nor to rid it of the plague that consumes it. He takes on responsibility voluntarily. The only justification is that he sees himself as an intrinsic part of his world and, as such, assumes for himself responsibility for its welfare. His decision establishes the viability of both Group and Grid.

THE CAFE

Eddy's decision exposes the underlying implications of his critical perspective by making them manifest through action. Simultaneously, the structural crisis between the personalised and integrated structures is elaborated through the activation of central metaphoric references.

From the start of the play, references to food have formed a major focus in the elaboration of the social/moral context.

vomit up guinness and mum's unspeakable excuse for cuisine
Booze and crisps in various chemical flavours
drink yards of stale gnats piss beer²⁷

(delicately compared, for example, to "a half bottle of chateau or bollinger, some pate and salad")

old bacon rind sits stinking in the pan and the room reches
of lard
only mothers pride and mousetrap cheese and a few miserable
tins of pilchards
and Heinz bakes beans (are sold at the corner shop)²⁸

These early references appear merely colourful additions to the accumulating picture of decay, passivity and neglect. Surreptitiously, however, they are setting up an active field of reference where the health and well-being of the social construct can be read

27. Act I, scene 1, p145

28. Act I, scene 1, p147

through the use and quality of food.

Once again, the whole may be read through its parts and v.v. Food has lost its fundamental function: to nourish. Indeed, it is barely even food: gnats piss, chemical flavours, etc. and has lost its attraction, taste. As the action develops, the fundamental social and moral battle between good and evil is fought through reference to food.

The cafe, too, is a microcosm reflecting the larger whole. Here, the major conflicts of the play are exposed and the major metaphoric arena brought into focus. Moreover, the action is initiated here. Eddy leaves the comparative safety of narration to become an active participant in his story.

Lack of standards does not necessarily mean lack of values. Rather, it suggests a lack of shared values relating to purpose and an over-all signifier. Eddy's assumption that there are external standards and inherent purpose and meaning in everything becomes overt in the cafe, albeit through the most mundane references.

Eddy enters the cafe with clear intent, an ideal, so to speak: an integrated snack. Coffee, croissant and butter. Each has its purpose; together they make a satisfying, meaningful whole that will nourish both body and soul. However, even this modest feast seems to be at cross purposes with the expression of life in the cafe.

To the waitress, each of these items is unique and unrelated to the others. She serves them without any sense of either purpose or unity.

E: Then why give me the croissant knowing you had no butter?
W: I'll get something else²⁹

E: I've finished the coffee now and won't have any liquid to wash the cake down with
 W: do you want another coffee?
 E: Not want but must not want but have to/you took so long to bring the cake that i've finished the coffee so bring another
 W: ok
 E: But bring it before i finish the cheesecake or i'll have nothing to eat with my second cup which i only really want as a masher for the cheesecake³⁰

Unbothered, the waitress goes back to discussing sex with her colleague. Her inability to serve might be seen as another reflection of the personalised ethic. The server, by definition, is dependant on the will and whim of the customer. The waitress' neglect of Eddy is a kind of bid for independence, a statement of his insignificance and a denial of role. The relationship between customer and server has broken down; the role is without meaning. Indeed, the entire purpose of the cafe is lost. The lack of acknowledged external values - like standards of cleanliness, excellence, quality, role and relationship, never mind nourishment! - turn the cafe into another free-for-all, a microcosm of the world outside.

where's my fucking coffee -
 I've nearly finished the cheesecake and then
my whole purpose in life at this particular moment in time
will be lost! I'll be drinking hot coffee with nothing to wash it down with³¹

However, despite his ideals and principles, Eddy is still a product of the society he means to save from itself. If anything, this point is the central pivot of the play: a denial of romantic individualist heroism where the hero erupts full-formed and pure, untouched by relationship or influence, unsoiled by the evils of the world around him. Although pitted against his world on the deepest

30. Act I, scene 5, p158

31. Act I, scene 5, p158/9

moral levels, Eddy is also its product.

Personally thwarted, Eddy responds with an energy and violence of language indicating knee-jerk response:

I'll come in your eyeballs, you putrefying piece of army gang bang³²

Now on home territory, the waitress replies in kind. Their exchange brings out the manager, instigating a fight to the death. A direct confrontation between two immutable world views, metaphorically presented through assumptions about food and role erupts into a microcosmic enactment of the general condition. The informing necessity to assert one's unique individual worth and the inevitable social consequence is exposed through action. Eddy's outburst and the ensuing fight are reflex actions, "natural" responses inbred through social conditioning to personal slight. The scene provides a detailed breakdown of the process. The contrast in the language delineates the automatic change-over. Although he has already assessed that such bids for personal aggrandizement lead only to transient victory and ultimate destruction, Eddy's inherited responses automatically take over. The plague is inherited. One cannot just slough it off. Despite his insights and the growing coherence of his new vision, Eddy is still, inevitably, a product of his world.

No physical contact takes place in this fight. All the energy and violence is verbal. Thus, attention is drawn from the struggle itself to the power and effect of language. When intent and success are the evaluative standards, speech tends to take a supportive role, elaborating explanation or justification. The fight celebrates the power of language restoring it as a field of viable

32. Act I, scene 5, p159

action, emphasising its effectiveness and warning against its dangers.

The verbalised duel isolates action and consequence. A physical fight, after all, assumes the understanding that someone could get hurt. To "verbalise" someone to death is unexpected and calls attention to the mismatch between intent and result. Consequence is highlighted. "I didn't mean to kill him" does not stand as adequate justification. Despite his intentions, Eddy finds the body of the man he has "verbalised to death" at his feet.

The fight also activates the structural premise of the text, pulling it into a formal whole. Eddy, until now semi-detached narrator, is fully participant, culpable centre of the drama.

The mismatch between effect and intent, means and ends, also raises the issue of responsibility. Eddy's response to the situation suggests commitment to his deeds, regardless of intent. As he voluntarily decided to take general responsibility for his society, he now specifically assumes the roles left vacant by the man he has killed: cafe owner and husband.

The wife's elegy over her dead husband is a blatant expression of the high Grid position that is a necessary residue of the personalised system.

who will put the kids to bed with a gentle cuff as he frolics after coming home all pissed from the pub and smashes me jokingly in the mouth/ whose vomit will I clean up from the pillow ...³³

Without her functional support of her husband, she has no value whatever. The death of her husband has rendered her worthless.

Eddy has decided to take on her husband's roles. He sug-

33. Act I, scene 5, p160

gests they be played out in an alternative structure. He offers her a change in status from servant to partner.

I'd rather treat you fair and square and touch your hair at night and kiss your sleeping nose ... I'll squeeze your toes at night if they get cold ... I'll take you love for what you are³⁴

She no longer has to prove her worth; it is implied through relationship and commitment to role. (Perhaps more shockingly, he implies emotional commitment through role!) The alternative structure and value system formerly implicit now begins to take active, viable form.

Violence breeds violence. Both the scene in the cafe and the "recognition scene" that follows isolate the pattern. Mother and son separated by a remnant of the conscious act of war; a natural unit destroyed by the consequence of violence, greed and pleasure principle inherited from the past.

The plot details and their reference to Oedipus are presented so blatantly and bluntly, they eschew intrigue. Instead of gradually disclosing significance, the naked statements establish Oedipus (in true Brechtian fashion) as context. The Gypsy's prophecy is reinforced, and the individual life placed in the context of a larger, inevitable, immutable pattern which gives it both direction and significance. The momentary unity restored through the gain of what has been lost also strengthens this pattern.

All along, Eddy has seen the individual example significant in its relationship to the larger, implicit whole. Now his story, too, is a paradigm of the inter-active relationship between microcosm and macrocosm.

34. Act I, scene 3, p161

Eddy has an active relationship with "Fate". He accepts the situations he encounters and takes responsibility within them in accordance with his vision of integration and the basic moral premise that harm is bad and to benefit others, good. In turn, Destiny has given direction to his life. It has provided a forming element, an activating incentive confirming significance and coherence. His parents, who have lost the battle to prove their unique significance, see Fate as an enemy, the ultimate oppressor. Confirming their high Grid position, it also releases them from both responsibility and effect.

I had to kick him out... fate makes us play the roles we're
cast
i've done nothing all my life
who knows what evil lies in store
that we are unaware of, did we cause
some grief somewhere, inflict some unhealed sore

Seeing themselves as ineffective victims, they see their deeds as irrelevant and without consequence and take no responsibility for them. The lack of coherent context severs the connections between cause and effect, past and present, word and deed. They make no connection between their own deeds and the prophecy.

perhaps we should have told him Dinah
Perhaps we ought to tell...
it's over now, it's past
it can't be undone with words
fate makes us play the role we're cast 35

The past, however, forms the present. In his attempt to affect change and find a viable place for himself, Eddy is constantly thwarted by the effects of the past, both personal and social. The present dilemma is a consequence of both his parents' specific actions and the social context where individuals locked in an ontological strug-

gle for acknowledgement have left an inheritance of violence, apathy and disintegration: the plague.

The underlying assumptions implicit in Eddy's critical perspective become overt and manifest in the action. His active participation elaborates the terms of his vision as well as those of his society. The incitement to action has exposed the depth of automatic social conditioning through unquestioned cosmological assumptions, ironically calling up the fundamental question of influence and inheritance.

ACT II

Act II opens where, arguably, the individualist story of the young man on the make would end. The hero is successful in his personal life and has made his mark on society. Eddy's integrating principles have been put to the test and produced beneficial results. "Ten years have come and gone" and he has made a place for himself in the world. Eddy and his wife describe their life in images of the natural world and cosmic unity. "This splendid symphony of life hath played its varied song" suggests both the good times and bad have become part of a larger, signifying pattern, contrasting notably with the original images of *ad hoc* senseless activity and violence in Part I and placing emphasis on process rather than result. So, for example, "the blazing sun and rain" contrasts with the "retreating sun".

More important, his success seems to rest not on his own unique personal qualities, but on his considered actions and their effect on the world around him, a restructuring through an alteration of the terms of evaluation. He has "shown how what this world doth crave is:

power, class and form with a dab of genius now and then. We cured the plague by giving inspiration to our plates/came rich by giving more and taking less³⁶

Food takes over as primary metaphor, regulating change and elaborating the complex interactions between microcosm and macrocosm, flesh and spirit, quality and value, and, hence, the fundamental moral code: benefit vs. harm. Through references to food, an inter-active relationship is established between the inner and outer man, between man and society, between body and soul. As the healthy body reflects a healthy soul, so too the healthy person reflects a healthy society.

The use of food as a primary metaphor is a particularly fortunate choice since health is automatically associated with eating. Nourishment is its purpose. The "unnatural", "unhealthy" food produced for profit rather than nourishment instantly suggests a fundamental disfunction which, through Eddy's chain of associative microcosms crystallises personal and social disfunction and its possible solution.

the old style portion control practised by fat thieves went out with us
we put the meat back into the sausage
no more the sawdust and preservative colouring and cat shit that you could better use to fill your walls than line your stomachs/so foul that nations overseas would ban them from their fair stalls lest their strong youth should fall into the listless british trance ... a nation half asleep and drugged with foul and bestial things poured out of packets ... but now in our great chain we energise the people give soul food and blistering blast of protein smack/sandwiches the size of fists chock full of juicy smile filled chunks³⁷

Again, action is assessed by consequence and effect, contrad, ultimately on the basic moral imperative - does it benefit or

36. Act II, scene 1, p166

37. Act II, scene 1, p166

harm? - assessed not in personal but in social terms.

Now once more the world will taste good/no more the sawdust and preservative colouring a nation asleep and drugged with foul and bestial things poured out of packets ...³⁸

Eddy's cosmological view, at first personal to himself, has, through action and response spread and become a viable social premise. He has set standards of excellence which have been externally acknowledged. He has put the world around him on the road to health, a recognition of shared standards, and an integration of inner and outer man as well as man and society. Pursuit of excellence has also overcome the greed of self-interest. Those who thrive on the weakness of others have lost their power

Got rid of sloth and stale/achievement/which once was thought as normal ... made the city golden era time ... the con men that have/tricked you all the while with substitute and fishy watery/soup/went out of business and people starved for nourishment/brain food and guts just flocked to us ... real food and drink/real substance for the soul.

We showed them the way/they died in trying to keep up with us/they faded in a heap.³⁹

The criteria of excellence over mediocrity has been acknowledged by customers and competitors alike. Eddy has begun to reorder and redeem his society. His approach and tactics are in direct opposition to the norm. Instead of seeking benefit for himself by weakening others, he has taken responsibility for their care and benefit. He evaluates himself and others in terms of their effect on the greater good. The healthy individual comes to imply an ordered, healthy, interactive world where each has purpose and effect. Effective action is that which integrates and benefits. Thus, the nourish-

38. Act II, scene 1, p166

39. Act II, scene 1, p165

ment of the person feeds the society and benefits both the individual and the group.

we'll drag them out of the pubs ...
it is us that has to do it/rid the world of half-assed bastards clinging to their dark domain and keeping talent out by filling the entrance with their swollen carcasses and sagging mediocrity ... lets blow them all sky high or let us see them simply waste away as the millions come to us. ⁴⁰

Eddy "has to do it" because Eddy is unable to accept the status quo. He sees a preferable alternative. Instead of a collection of individuals at war, or, at best, indifferent, under the assumption that the very existence of one negates the value of the other, Eddy assumes an interactive-collective where each life is evaluated by its benefit to the others. Where before food was produced for personal gain despite its content or effect, now it nourishes both the parts and the whole.

Despite Eddy's success, however, the inevitable pattern of Oedipus hovers unresolved. It undercuts the achievement and its rewards.

there's still a plague
around this city that will not go away ... but continues
to rot away inside the wholesome body of our state ...
and death stalks in the foul and
pestilent breath of friends whose eyes are drunk with envy
and greed at your success. ⁴¹

The whole, again, reflects the parts. The plague is both a state of mind and a physical disease, both personal and social.

the illness of inertia, and should i shant i ...
the blood and plasma of creation is swept and flushed away ⁴²

The inherited reality system has become destructive to life itself.

40. Act II, scene 1, pl67

41. Act II, scene 1, pl67

42. Act II, scene 1, pl67

Generations of greed, self-interest, fear and destructive emotion have worn away the fabric of society. The interactive dependence between the individual and the larger context is elaborated in the growth and effect of the plague. Sex, seemingly so intimately private, has become a social issue. The sexually transmitted plague reads back to the preconceptions of the individualist concept. After sex-as-violence follows sex with oneself, the ultimate act of self-obsession, fear of others and isolation. Partnership has become risky. Procreation, the very core of life, has stopped. All signs of birth are destroyed. The feat of the Other and the drive to augment Self at their expense has overtaken the most instinctive drive, the continuance of the race. Without others, there is no survival.

Predictably, Eddy takes it upon himself to rid the country of the Sphynx. In her, Eddy faces the violent history of mankind. The Sphynx' liturgy of man's abuse of power for temporal aggrandisement emphasises effect rather than glory, turning the history of mankind into a repetitive pattern of hatred and self-destruction. Retaining the memory of the brutality and consequent suffering of this history is the burden of the Sphynx. She must carry it until an acknowledgement and acceptance of mutual culpability frees her and mankind. Acceptance of responsibility and the denial of inevitability appear to be the first step in changing the pattern.

In a personalised world, an individual may be released from responsibility by achieving success, by offering convincing justification, or by placing the blame on others. Eddy could do this. These deeds occurred before he was born; he is personally innocent. His answer to the riddle reduces all men to fundamental, common, pattern, redefining Mankind from a collection of individuals to a collective species. By implication, Eddy accepts this brutal history as his own,

acknowledging responsibility for the past. Eddy can see as the Sphinx sees: the pattern of behaviour, the power and significance of effect. He sees himself as both one amongst many and as a representative of mankind. Thus, he can answer her riddle, relieving her of her burden and destroying the permanence of her definitions.

go plot and scheme, hunt and exploit and rape, oppress and
make a few evil laws to love is to enslave a woman ... to
turn her into a breeding cow
to produce cannon fodder to go on killing ...
women are all Sphinx, I have taken the power for all 43

As one man is all men, all women are one woman. Although the continuance of life depends on unity between man and women, opposition of purpose and definition have made them ontological enemies: women create, men destroy. The plague is a manifestation of this antipathy. The Sphinx' elaboration of the destructive past implies this to be a basic fact of existence. However, her death releases the inevitability of automatic repetition. Eddy is free to express his love for women and general appreciation.

i love a woman/ i love her
i just love and love and love her/ and even that one
i could have loved her/ i love everything that they
possess ... 44

This speech suggests a qualitative change. Sexual imagery is transformed to express personal and sexual sharing and satisfaction. After the death of the Sphinx, sexual terms formerly illustrating violence and oppression become terms of endearment. Conflict gives way to inter-dependence and mutual benefit. Later, a love song between Eddy and his wife stresses their mutual dependence and plea-

43. Act II, scene 2, p168/9

44. Act II, scene 3, p171

sure.

you're sweet
your body's like a river, flowing, flowing into me/ it moves
like a flowing river ...
when i'm in your arms i'm carried along this endless stream
and then i reach the sea ... 45

Sexual activity is restored to its association with the life-giving process, the "endless sea" of life. The use of sexual reference is integral to the action and metaphoric progress of the play. The change in the use of sexual imagery denotes a change in the purpose and definition of relationship which, in turn, indicates a fundamental difference in the way men define themselves in relation to the other. In parallel with the references to food, sexual reference reflects the personal, social and cosmological condition and charts its change.

Starting out as an isolated individual seeking his fortune, Eddy comes to stand for the viability of an alternative social, cosmological system immutably opposed to the established norm which, itself, is hastening to a self-destructive end.

It is shocking, then, to find that Eddy, while reshaping society and its precepts, glories in the material rewards prescribed by that society as acknowledgment of that success. On the one hand, the short scene where Eddy and his wife revel in their material gains prepares us for the news that the plague still rages. (As Shakespeare's Claudius says, you can't repent and keep the goods!) On the other, it sets the movement towards the end of the play where Eddy is forced to reevaluate the foundations of the moral context. In naked confrontation with fundamental principles, goods are unquestionably

45. Act II, scene 3, p173

irrelevant.

Eddy's parents bring the past into the present. Before, we saw them through Eddy's eyes; now, they speak for themselves, bringing the plague with them. Their bitter, calloused arguments cut abrasively against the tender inter-dependence and respect between Eddy and his wife. Their greetings are automatic and hollow; traditions devoid of informing content, habitual repetitions of empty form.

you are nice, have a nice day, you're welcome ...
you've a lovely home, it's really lovely, just lovely.
some people are lucky, some people have all the fun.
some mothers do have 'em. mind you, i mean it goes to show,
well it does. Idle hands make wicked thoughts 46

Empty moralising with a touch of envy suggests that the automatic attitudes that masquerade as "tradition" and morality are merely further devices to denigrate others, not integrating measures of morality and significance. The process is hideously augmented as the mother comforts herself with tales of violence, taking overt delight in finding herself superior to both victims and victimisers. The unmistakable voice of the media shines through her words, intimating that the obsessive attraction to violence is, like chemical foodstuffs, force-fed to the consumer for profit.

Eddy's father, immobilised by defeat, never questioning the social assumptions that have sucked his value from him, comes to represent an army of men destroyed by the paradoxes of the individualist system:

... so what I got asbestos
in my lung/so what i got coal dust in my blood/so what i got
lead poisoning in my brain/so what i got shot nerves from
the machines/so what i lost two fingers in the press ...
i'd do it again/ yes I would i tell ye

46. Act II, scene 4, p171

so what I got fuck all for it from our fair state ... 47
so what they're gliding past in their Rolls Royces ...

True g/g position is the privilege of the few. Its demands inevitably produce a majority of high Grid subordinates, pawns of the successful individualists who prove their superior uniqueness. Nonetheless, the precepts of individualism promise unique acknowledgement; the result is a reversion to violence against each other to grasp even a show of worth. (This is the society Eddy originally described, the hapless gratification of the one in the pain of others.)

The "revelation scene" exposes a tale of rampant opportunism. The consequence of past action erupts to form the present: a pleasure cruiser blown up by a forgotten war bomb. The father, involved in the rescue action, found and kept the baby. His justifications are predictable by individualist assumptions. 1) He himself had once been harmed, giving him the right to compensation. "two million dead including my boy". 2) personal desire: his wife wanted a baby. "mum was double chuffed to see a round soft ball of warm goo". 3) lethargy and disregard of consequences: "a day turned into two ..."

The baby is described as an object adding to the value of the possessor. The very fact he worked on the rescue team and found the baby gave Dad the right to keep it. His description strips the child of all personal, individual or emotional qualities, linking the speech with the implications of "spawned" in the opening line, both metaphorically and physically. They kept the baby out of self-interest, in defiance of that most fundamental relationship: mother and child.

Two particular deviations from Sophocles' text arguably

47. Act II, scene 4, p177

assist in the logic of the present text. The first is the plague. The plague is not initiated by Eddy or his actions. It is active before he even leaves home. Here, the plague is essentially a social disease. Eddy is a product of that society, despite his unwillingness to collude, and thus haplessly infected. The second is the question of culpability. The question of guilt in Greek is linked with the possibility of choice and placed firmly on the shoulders of the parents. In terms of Oedipus, it suggests a much-overlooked interpretation: that it is Laius who initiated the action. In Greek, both issues elaborate the central crisis, the problem of being both separate from and the product of one's personal and social inheritance: the search for a meaningful definition of mankind as both individual and social participant.

The self-preservation for which the parents kept the secret now forces them to tell. Their feeble justifications, though socially acceptable, wither in relation to the enormity of the deed and its effect. Their lack of concern focuses the contrast for the audience.

Even though he is not their child, the parents quibble over Eddy's "inheritance", each claiming to be the source of his success, divesting him of the responsibility or capacity for independent action. Plainly, there are many ways by which the individual may be shorn of worth and by which consequence may be divorced from action. Even their "love" turns out to have been self-preservative: "we didn't want you to hate us".

Eddy is trapped in a vortex of conflicting forces. His romantic memories of childhood arguably taught him to treasure relationship, but they are revealed to have been the product of self-interest. The new world he inspired with the values of relationship, the general good, and the moral necessity of mutual benefit is poi-

soned by the self-interest and callousness of his own past:

me who wants to clean up the city/stop the plague destroy
the Sphinx/me was the source of all the stink/the man of
principle is a mother-fucker.⁴⁸

The use of "me" in contrast to the consistent "I" of the opening and of his parents pinpoints the change of focus from subject to object; the contrast between what you do and what you are born into. "Me" stresses Eddy's place as a passive object and product of his society.

Marrying your mother sets the issues of relationship and identity into relief. Eddy is not his parents' son; he's not even adopted. His mother is both his mother and his wife. Son who is not son, object turned man. Eddy is an anomaly, both victim of his history and separate from it.

Oedipus, too, is an anomaly, but the implications of the resulting situations are profoundly different. Oedipus starts out as both member and representative of an integrated society. His quest for personal identity moves him inexorably towards isolation. Ultimately, his anomalous state places him outside the signifying definitions of his society and therefore outside integral meaning. Eddy begins alone, in a critical relationship to his world. His inherited ties with his world have been a burden drawing him back into a moral context which is turning in on itself and whose significances he cannot credit. Where Oedipus is driven to search for uniqueness, Eddy, has gravitated towards relationship and interaction. His indefinable status now places him momentarily on the edge between the demands of his personalised inheritance and his own vision of an integrated cosmology and gives him the freedom to choose, under the

48. Act II, scene 4, p182

understanding, of course, that each choice has a price.

What is a "real" wife? One who is not your mother? One confirmed by tradition and contract? Or one with whom you share mutual love and growth? His decision requires an assessment of fundamental assumptions and definitions.

does it matter that you are my mother. i'll love you even if i am your son/do we cause each other pain, do we kill each other, do we sail and kill, do we inflict vicious wounds on each other, we only love so it doesn't matter mother ... I sat and stared at the rheumy faces and the dead souls with their real wives who were plastered forever in casts of drab compromise, my own wife seemed like a princess ... i sat and projected her picture on the moon and poured through every page of our life together like a great holy bible of magic events ⁴⁹

Eddy applies his basic moral code: mutual benefit and integrated health vs. self-aggrandisement, general dissolution and suffering. All around him, people are trapped in inertia. Their actions are meaningless, repetitive, non-productive, even destructive; at best merely desperate struggles for a shred of acknowledgement. He considers the weight of traditional morality and definitions applied to his practical dilemma and rejects them.

"Why should i tear my eyes out ... oh Oedipus, how could you do it?"⁵⁰

The conscious reference to Oedipus activates the parallel plot. Eddy is placing himself in direct relationship to an established pattern, its series of associations and consequences, and its "unquestionable" moral assumptions. He questions it in terms of his practical experience and his alternative vision. Oedipus and his prescribed action (and, one assumes, its attendant assumptions of "nobility" and "heroism") are offered as the crystallisation of

49. Act II, scene 4, p182/1

50. Act II, scene 4, p183

established, traditional values, its lines of response coded and set through time.

For Eddy (and theoretically for the audience) they have lost their resonance. They appear self-defeating and wilfully pointless. Tradition has become hollow, empty habit. Used as yet another device for oppression, it has been divested of the ability to invest actions with value and meaning. Social assumptions and traditional morality, represented by Oedipus, can no longer be taken for granted. Even Eddy's implicit assumptions of an alternative system of personal and social signification must be made explicit so the basic terms of his choice may be assessed. Eddy must choose either to adhere to the conventional, unquestioned precepts and traditional morality of his society or to defy even the most basic of its moral tenets, to commit himself to the unknown consequence of attempting to forge an alternative moral structure and become its first adherent against traditional and moral consensus. He bases his decision on his own primary moral principle:

yeh i wanna climb back inside by mum. what's wrong with
that. its better than shoving a stick of dynamite up some-
one's ass and getting a medal for it. so i run back. i run
and run and pulse hard and feet pound
its love i feel
... exit from paradise/entrance to heaven⁵¹

Eddy's language and the terms of his decision turn his love for his mother from a repellent act of devotion to an act of completion. Child and husband, a microcosm in himself, Eddy returns to redefine the world at its foundations: a redefinition of relationship. Loving the mother is presented as the ultimate unity: return to the source. The acknowledgement of the source, itself, is an

51. Act II, scene 4, p183

expression of integration, an opposition to the "self made" protestations of individualism and handmaiden to the responsibilities Eddy accepted for the injustices of history. The confrontation with the Sphinx and its effect opened the possibilities for structural change through redefinition. As Eddy became self-elected antagonist of the plague and the sphinx, he now takes on the self-initiated role of Adam in the new world.

That such an extraordinary conclusion should even appear viable to an audience, never mind desirable, is the consequence of the clarity and focus with which the underlying implications of the social cosmologies have been elaborated and the consistency and practicality of the simple adjudicating moral code.

The play seeks terms to discuss the complex relationship between the individual ("I") and the social participant ("we") by unearthing the basic assumptions defining man's place and purpose in the universe. Personalisation gives little credit to interaction or the general good; its celebration of power and possession as individual expression lead to isolation and strife. Thus, "society" tends to imply an inchoate mass, dangerous and/or oppressive. In contrast, a more integrated view highlights general effect and offers significant inclusion. Man becomes more than the keeper of his own soul. The macrocosmic signifier, Destiny, gives pattern and meaning to action taken within its prescribed form. Although Eddy's progress is constantly thwarted by the clash between the two sets of premises, the presentation inclines towards a growing confidence in the viability and ultimate preferability of an integrated perspective and its promise for both personal and social evaluation.

Eddy's tale is not a personal history, but a parable. Or, to be more accurate, a proposition. Berkoff's insistent, stylised lan-

quage and gestural style distance the audience from personal identification with the protagonist while enlisting their emotional involvement with the argument. The dense encapsulation of moral confrontation in a sparse set of scenes gives Eddy archetypal stature, so by the end of the play he has become representative of the possibility of qualitative change. For both Eddy and the audience, the recognition and acceptance of the viability of change presents the next challenge.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to test the applicability of Dr Mary Douglas' model of Cultural Bias as an interpretive device for dramatic analysis and in the process assess the implications regarding the social connotations of form and the qualifications of the model as a basis for a structural Poetics.

An external model has obvious advantages. Like a mathematical formula may be used with any numbers, so a model can be applied to any material regardless of its overt content, shape or apparent worth (or the applicator's personal preferences). Like an equation, the model serves as a language for making distinctions, developing comparisons and establishing terms for discussion. The principles and terms, though understood and shared, are external to both the critic and the work. A model offers a signifying base and stable structure for analysis and comparison, eliminating arbitrariness and allowing the critic to explore the work without confusion with her own subjective values. (Of course, this is an ideal. We all know any theory, no matter how clear and incisive, can and will be distorted. Nothing is fool-proof. However, poor disciples do not discredit the insight.)

The G/G model is simple. Its terms are easy to understand since their references are undistorted from their use in ordinary discourse. It offers a coherent, consistent base from which to explore interactions which are themselves in flux. Because the model is geared towards cultural analysis, it promises not only to set objective terms and a stable context by which single works and comparisons might be fruitfully explored but also to expose implicit relationships between the single artifact and its social context.

Thus, as well as a viable set of terms for textual analysis,

the model promises to provide a possible format for a Poetics based on the sub-structural themes resulting from the play's perspective on and relationship to the cosmological reality system of its world, delineating an active social relationship between the artifacts and its society which would support the Poetic categorisation.

AN INTERPRETIVE STANDARD FOR ANALYSIS OF THE INDIVIDUAL TEXT

The first test of an analytic model, especially one gleaned from another discipline, is its applicability as an analytic tool in producing a coherent interpretation of the specific work. Thus, I have concentrated on direct analysis of a variety of single plays, assuming further implications would emerge from the studies. As a model for textual analysis, the G/G hypothesis provides a revealing and stimulating critical perspective as well as a performance/production model.

The terms of the model imply that the play be viewed as an integrated whole in which all the parts collaborate to produce coherence, effect and significance. This paradigm creates both demands and advantages. The avowed inter-dependence of the parts imposes a responsibility on the interpreter to include all the parts in the interpretive examination. An effective relationship is assumed between form and content, language and action, suggesting that elements of performance, too, are implicitly indigenous to the effective working of the text. Consequently, language, characters or scenes which at first glance do not seem commensurate with an assumed interpretation of content require inclusion and elaboration. However, since the whole and the parts are interactive and inter-dependent, apparent anomalies in one can be examined and assessed in terms of the other. The model offers both a perspective and a language with

which to isolate and elaborate significant elements of form as well as a stable context in which they might be studied without distortion to the parts or the whole.

Fundamentally, the terms of the model recommended a reversal of the conventional view of the relationship between form and content. The emphasis is transferred from content to form. Rather than an arbitrary receptacle for subject matter, form is seen as the primary signifier. The suggestion is that form gives rise to content. The organisational process of form sets the perspective on the subject matter, imbuing it with thematic content and significance.

The emphasis on form and the directive that all assumptions are obligatory objects of investigation may make content-based criticism problematic, but it also frees the critic and enlarges his domain. The "objective" model can serve as a shared language and standard. The release from subjective content-based assumptions frees the critic from the insidious necessity to prove himself through his interpretation. It also offers a comprehensible set of terms to serve as a mode of communication so extensive discourse can take place. (One implicit area of study might be a comparative analysis of critical perspectives in terms of the social assumptions informing them).

The directive to unearth the underlying assumptions behind all communication highlights the critic's own personal assumptions and also offers a fresh perspective by which both critical assumptions and textual "problems", ambiguities and anomalies can be addressed. A prominent example in this paper is a suggestion for a reassessment of the conventional assumptions regarding formal structure.

The analysis of Tamberlaine recommends a new perspective on

both Marlowe's capacities as a playwright and our criteria regarding dramatic structure. Common critical consensus paints Marlowe as an inept builder. Complimented on his creation of dynamic, archetypal central characters, he is simultaneously condemned for his apparent inability to integrate them into a cohesive whole. The plays are often presented as vehicles for their titanic heroes and "the mighty line", the structure dismissed as untidy and repetitive; the content, as garbled or simplistic. The famous Guthrie-Wolfit production, for example, based on the premise thrt the play was interesting but confused, structurally unsound - a messy work consisting of a long line of battles, overburdening speeches and extraneous "poetry" - settled for a savagely cut version concentrating on isolated moments of overt action and promotion of the main character in inconographic fashion. The production confirmed expectations by proving to be confused, static, rambling and without much coherent point.

The G/G model, however, reveals Tamberlaine to have a remarkably intricate, precise structure in which the "action" is not the superficial delineation of Tamberlaine's "personality" nor a history of his battles, but an elaboration of the struggle for control, order and Meaning on a cosmic scale. Through this lens, the play is active, dynamic and has a clear, compelling progress in which each of its elements is indispensable.

The demands of linear, content-based reading can distort the content, itself, making the piece confusing, even barely comprehensible. One by-product is the habit of eliminating offending elements in an attempt to restructure the piece in accordance with accepted notions about form and content. (Thus, Marlowe's verse, Rosencrans and Guildenstern, Malcolm creating Earls, etc "go to it".)

The analysis, however, suggests that it is not the plays but

the limitations of our assumptions that give rise to many of these difficulties. By beginning at the sub-structural isolation of cosmological perspective, the model casts light on plays which do not adhere to conventional expectations of formal organisation, such as Timberlaine, Armstrong's Last Goodnight and The Song of Light, suggesting conventional criteria for structure, form and the dissemination of content may be limited. Although these plays do not adhere to conventionally commendable organisation, their structures are revealed to be an intricate component in their process of action and signification. The interpretation suggests our criteria regarding form and structure are restrictive. Many of the conundrums posed by conventional criticism might appear less bemusing if the plays were viewed from a different perspective. Use of the model suggests reassessment beginning with the assumption that the play, like any artifact, is an integrated whole in which all the disparate parts contribute towards its completion, and that its form is a manifestation of its active relationship with the social cosmology of its world.

FOUNDATIONS FOR A SYSTEM OF POETICS

The social implications of the model assume an indigenous interactive relationship between society and its artifacts. Since this relationship is inherent in every area of human existence, it is arguably applicable to every form of communication, including the Arts. Analysis of the individual plays consistently implies a broader, defining base elaborating the sub-structural themes delineating the work's active relationship to the cosmological status quo.

Form is proposed to be the manifestation of cosmological perspective. Form organises the subject matter, imbuing it with

thematic content. As an expression of cosmological perspective, the form has inherent questions and themes which organise and inform the content of the work. These structural themes give rise to the structure of the work and its possible significations. That is, by creating a perspective on the content, it both limits its parameters and opens areas of implication and development.

All artifacts have cosmological content created through their interactive relationship with the prevailing cosmology. The resulting sub-structural perspective gives rise to their form. The communication of this process to the audience/society is an essential ingredient in the effectiveness and signifying of the work. The model provides the tools to isolate and elaborate these processes. The possibility is posed of a Poetics where genre might be identified through the cosmological perspective informing the work and its communication of this perspective with its public.

This paper concentrates on Tragedy. It proposes that Tragedy is the manifestation of a perspective in which the two major, immutably opposed, cosmological reality systems (G/G. g/g) are seen as equally viable (although not necessarily equally preferable). The action of the Tragedy is formed by the necessity to find a viable platform of action and, hence, validation, in a context of changing evaluation. The cosmological confrontation between the presenting cosmology and its opposite causes an exposure and elaboration of the self-evident precepts on which it is founded through the action and consequence of the drama. Thus, Tragedy makes the implicit explicit, and functions as an elaborated code in active relationship to its society/audience. Through action and language it encapsulates a perspective on the reality crisis in archetypal form extending the language and symbol of the elaborative social discourse.

It follows that Tragedy, dependent on the perception of an alternative reality construct, occurs at a point when the society is at a crossroads of major change. Its very rareness is an indication that the possibility of Tragic form is dependent on a change in the status of the prevailing cosmology. That is, it would not be possible to THINK of an alternative manner of structuring reality if the bonds of the present system were not loosening. Thus, it is proposed that Tragedy can only occur when the absolute exclusiveness of the existing cosmology is weakening and its opposite coming into viable focus. Through the construct of Tragedy, the weaknesses, anomalies and implications of the previously unquestioned underlying precepts of the existing system are exposed and the viability of its opposite entertained.

An added confirmation to this argument is the appearance of specific comic structure which seems to accompany Tragedy. Ben Jonson, Middleton, Massinger, Stoppard, Barnes, Arden, etc, have all produced comic constructs whose structure and thematic content differ in kind from more prevalent comic forms and at first glance (though more study would be necessary) seem to share a cosmological perspective with their Tragic counterparts. These plays have often suffered critical dismissal on the grounds of their structural differences, their disappointment of conventional expectations and failure to conform to structural criteria. G/G analysis might reveal a more resonant coherence between form and content. Comparative analysis between this form of comedy and Tragedy could yield insights into fundamental differences between the comic and tragic perspectives.

I have already noted how content-based, linear reading can produce emotive judgment and categorisation, or lead to the elimina-

tion of parts which appear to run contrary to expectations. It has also encouraged generalisations based on superficial elements of content, producing categories and judgements more revealing of the critic and his social ethos than the works themselves. For example, the assumption that form comes in an off-the-pag state, a matter of almost arbitrary choice that is assessed by the relative "seriousness" of its subject; or, to use the model, that "Tragedy", by definition, celebrates the anguish and *de facto* heroism of the current cosmology has lead to the assumption that Shakespearean Tragedy must be promoting elitism and the status quo while "modern tragedies" can only celebrate the glory of the individual. However, the foregoing analysis suggests that we are dealing here with two entirely different forms with different structures and different social functions, and that Tragedy, rather than confirming the status quo, stands in critical relationship to its society, exposing the truths it takes foregranted for examination.

It might be worth mentioning that throughout the plays there seems to be an underlying preference for G/G. It is understandable that the modern plays, moving as they are from g/g to G/G, would find the Integrated concept preferable, if not ideal. However, it is more surprising to find that the classical works, moving in the opposite direction, all seem to exhibit a sense of loss and regret at the passing of Integration and a wariness of g/g whose fundamental weaknesses seem more easily identifiable. To reveal the causes and implications of this observation would, of course, take another detailed study.

The communicative relationship between the social context and the form of the artifact allows one to read in either direction and, hence, has several salient implications. If, for example, the

appearance of tragedy marks a formal indication of a sub-structural crisis in the social ethos, then the drama, if not all the Arts, serve a prophetic function, not only in projecting the paths of possible consequence and change but also in stimulating and encouraging the imagination to prepare for change: making alternatives imaginable. Theoretically, if we were cognizant of the changes in form in the Arts, we could read forward into the direction of social change on the sub-structural level and, arguably, participate in directing the terms and balances of that change.

The model furnishes the material to elaborate the degree to which the Arts are not only the "chronicles" of our time but its prophets, regulators and teachers. It shows the Arts to be necessary participants in social structuring and discourse, offering a basis to refute the rather philistine notion that Art is merely the icing on the social cake. The terms of the model imply a constant discussion between society and its artifacts conducted through their formal structure, (after all, "all the world's a stage"!) each informing and affecting the other. (Imagistically, Art is the society dreaming: confirming its truths, justifying itself, experimenting with new forms, readjusting its terms). This discussion with ourselves inevitably includes our relationship with the artifacts of the past as well as those we are creating. Thus critical assumptions and perspectives are part of its process.

An external model of classification independent of personal response to the specific work can furnish a context in which contemporary plays might enter into significant discussion with their predecessors. The terms of classification are, after all, as applicable to modern plays as standard texts. However, the emphasis on form rather than content or stylistic elements reduces the difficulties of

proximity and the distances between time periods and promises to establish an interactive field by which contemporary plays and their predecessors could shed light upon each other.

Hence, I have edged back, full circle, to my original desire to examine dramatic language and its extension into "dramatic poetry". If my analysis of sub-structural themes is valid, then Armstrong's Last Goodnight, The Sons of Light, Greek and The Fall of Usher, may be examined in relation to the Greek and Elizabethan Tragedies. Their languages, although neither choric odes nor iambic pentameter, are clearly condensed forms of vernacular speech, and comparative examination might shed light both on the contemporary plays and the classics. A process of study might be set whereby, first, one might examine the fundamental functions of dramatic dialogue, *per se*, as opposed to conversational chat, in terms of its functions within the action. Second, to isolate the similarities between the uses of dialogue in the Tragedies, both modern and classical, concentrating on their function in sub-structural elaboration. Third, attempt to examine the architecture of the "heightened" (or condensed) language within that function in order to develop some insight into the necessities for this manner of condensation. Associated examinations would involve the use and development of metaphor and the relationship between linguistic and visual/dramatic metaphor in the action, etc.

Another area of study suggested by this approach to Poetics is comparative work not only between playwrights but between periods. As previously mentioned, plays which present their cosmological perspectives in the same terms, like Faustus and Macbeth, can be seen to have the same basic construct. A basis is provided for further comparative and elaborative study. Identifying the common pattern in

plays of different periods opens the possibility of examining not only differences in elaboration between the playwrights but also inherent differences within the societies they represent, suggesting new perspectives on the investigation of the drama in its social context. Such studies might shed light not only on assumptions regarding the use of the stage but also inherent differences of focus within the societies themselves.

There are specific questions which seem to require terms to elaborate the inter-dependence between artistic forms and their social context. The predominance of comedy in Roman theatre, for example, or the preference for comic form in the Restoration.

The model itself is neutral. It does not assume that "Tragedy", *per se*, is a superior form to "the tragic" or a less "serious" perspective. The emphasis on form and function allows non-judgemental elaborative categorisation and criticism based on shared terms and social interaction. All forms have served necessary social functions. Judgemental assessments on the basis of form are exposed as the personal perspective and preference of the critic who, although perfectly entitled to have them, is not entitled to ignore them.

To show that Death of a Salesman has a different form and social function than Macbeth or Antigone is merely to delineate its formal, cosmological perspective. As Death of a Salesman and other modern examples of "the tragic" are motivated by unquestioning commitment to the fundamental precepts of Personalisation and move towards celebrating those truths with their audience, so, on the opposite side of the scale, we would expect to find serious plays founded in the precepts of Integration and focused towards its celebration with their audience: for example, The Medieval Mystery Plays,

Japanese Noh, The Rybbyk.

The model offers terms of analysis which could form the basis of a signifying classification system, in contrast to analysis for the sake of classification itself. In other words, the classification would present terms, definitions and perspectives elaborating formal, functional distinctions, setting a comprehensive external set of terms from which both examination of individual plays and comparative analysis could expand beyond the personal insights of the investigator.

This paper has concentrated on Tragedy, attempting to elaborate its specific formal perspective and its difference in form and social function from "the tragic". However, Tragedy, the tragic, "the mystic" (to coin a phrase) and, above all, "Comedy", are fairly large, encompassing categories. Most would inevitably need subdivisions. Different approaches, terms, emphases and focuses within the same form would provide sub-categories and furnish us with the terms of a comprehensive comparative and elaborative discourse. Many works, of course, will not even fall into these general categories and would demand categories of their own.

"Comedy" is a particularly problematic area. The term is remarkably unrevealing, suggesting anything from "not a tragedy" to "happy ending" to "roll in the aisles laughing". As a definition it is virtually meaningless, relating little except that the play is unlikely to be depressing (but, then, there's Chekhov!)

"Comedy" encompasses a wide variety of forms. Nonetheless, it is still capable of calling forth assumptions and expectations which can lead to misunderstanding and distortions of both performance and criticism; both the plays and the study of the drama could benefit from clear, more resonant terms.

Different forms of comedy will have different cosmological perspectives and different functions in relation to the social discourse. Chances are, the humour will have different bases and function in different relationship to the process of the overall concept. It is fairly obvious, for example, that a play which relies on physical slapstick is running on different assumptions regarding both human life and society than one which relies for its humour on verbal witticisms. The uses of humour and the relationship of humour to the structure and cosmological stance leaves a wealth of work still to be done.

Recently, one of my students applied the model to a popular TV soap. Projecting the action forward on the basis of her study, she not only opened a fertile area of comparative study, both between English soaps, and between the English and American varieties, but also implied a resonant area of examination where one might compare the underlying cosmological perspective of the text with the implications of its presentation.

The usefulness of the model is not limited to drama. One can see at a glance, for example, that there is structural opposition between the vertical organisation of early music and the linear process of Romantic music where the single line is supported by the entire structure. The observation itself implies inter-relationship with social ordering and might provide a starting point for analysis of musical structures and forms in a new perspective.

Similarly, the model could prove useful in the literary field. For example, if one is not committed to a Darwinian concept of progress implying the novel is the perfect literary form, then the emergence of the novel as a form in its own right raises interesting

questions. Its rather late development and the profound change of form at the turn of the century suggest a wealth of possible studies based on the novel's relationship to cosmological perspective and social demands. If social/cosmological demands give rise to form, there is a wide field of study assessing the novel as a response to those demands: the evolution of the form, the change in perspective from the 19th to 20th century novel, maybe, even, a more detailed and comprehensive study of "magic realism" in terms of its function in the novel form in preference to the generalised, emotive associations presently in use.

Any artifact might be fruitfully investigated as an interactive inter-independent part of the larger, signifying whole, its form being the direct communication device with the active social cosmological context.

This paper demonstrates the viability of Dr Douglas' Group/Grid model of Cultural Bias as a critical tool and draws out some of the implications including its suitability as a context for establishing a sub-structural Poetics and its implications regarding the social relevance of drama and the Arts. It is not my intention to suggest it replace all other perspectives and forms of analysis, but to offer the model as a resonant context in which old questions might be resolved and new questions reveal further depths. The implicit social/cosmological base gives a range of reference that allows for comprehensive study as well as a centering on active discourse since it assumes all behaviour, language and symbolic expression are both product and producer of the social context. Thus, it promises an over-view which, though both simple and stable, suggests a host of stimulating areas of study and sets the examination in an active social context.

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